

December 3, 2004

Dear Sir/Madam:

The State Board of Education is seeking applications for **state and local charter schools and in particular, applications, which will result in the reduction of racial, ethnic and economic isolation in Hartford.** Charter schools are public nonsectarian schools which operate independently of any local or regional board of education and represent an innovative means for educational change. They are designed and operated by enterprising groups of parents, educators and other members of the community who have a clear vision of an educational mission, and at the same time, are held accountable to their students and the public. At the present time, there are fourteen state charter schools operating in Connecticut.

Applications for state charters must be filed on or before March 18, 2005. The State Board of Education anticipates granting charters on a staggered basis, depending on when an application is filed. Therefore, applications filed earlier than the deadline will receive consideration sooner than those filed close to or at the deadline.

Applications for local charters must be filed with the local or regional board of education by March 18, 2005, with a copy to the State Board of Education. The local or regional board of education must vote on the application and, if approved, forward it to the State Board of Education for action. The State Board must vote on the application within seventy-five days of the date on which it is received from the local or regional board of education.

State charter schools are funded by a per-pupil grant from the General Assembly which, for the current year, is \$7,250. In addition, \$110 was added to the \$7,250 per pupil grant for this fiscal year. The current appropriation is sufficient to fund 2693 seats. Local charters receive funding from the boards of education in which students attending the charter school reside and budgets must be negotiated on an individual school basis. **It is important to note that the 2005-07 biennial budget may not contain funding for additional charter schools. We cannot guarantee that there will be sufficient funding to allow successful applicants to open in September 2005. The State Board of Education will approve applications contingent on funding from the General Assembly in the 2005 session.**

We anticipate the State Board of Education will rank approved charter schools in the order in which they will open if and when funding becomes available. Contingent approval will be for a two-year period; at the end of that time, State Board approval will be null and void.

If you have any questions with regard to the foregoing, please call Mark Linabury, Charter School Program Manager, at (860) 713-6558 or e-mail him at [mark.linabury@po.state.ct.us](mailto:mark.linabury@po.state.ct.us).

Sincerely,

Betty J. Sternberg  
Commissioner of Education

Enclosure

**CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
HARTFORD**

**APPLICATION PACKAGE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
STATE AND LOCAL CHARTER SCHOOLS  
C.G.S. Sec. 10-66aa-hh (as amended)**

**November, 2004**

**PURPOSE:** To develop a process and establish criteria for the development of state and local charter schools that provide opportunities for improved student learning and academic excellence for all students. (The application can be downloaded from the Connecticut State Department of Education's website ([www.state.ct.us/sde](http://www.state.ct.us/sde)) on the "Charter School Information" web page)

**Applications Due: Friday, March 18, 2005**

**Application - 020**

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## **CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Dr. Betty J. Sternberg  
Commissioner of Education

IT IS THE POLICY OF THE CONNECTICUT BOARD OF EDUCATION THAT NO PERSON SHALL BE EXCLUDED FROM PARTICIPATION IN, DENIED BENEFITS OF, OR OTHERWISE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST UNDER ANY PROGRAM INCLUDING EMPLOYMENT, BECAUSE OF RACE, COLOR, RELIGIOUS CREED, SEX, AGE, NATIONAL ORIGIN, ANCESTRY, MARITAL STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, MENTAL RETARDATION, AND PAST/PRESENT HISTORY OF MENTAL DISORDER, LEARNING DISABILITY AND PHYSICAL DISABILITY.

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# CONNECTICUT CHARTER APPLICATION

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## INTRODUCTION

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Recognizing the need for improvement in our public schools, Connecticut responded to the ever-growing interest in public school choice and charter schools by adopting charter school legislation. Connecticut's law, passed during the 1996 legislative session, responds to the unique concerns raised during several years of debate on the establishment of such schools. It was the belief of the legislature and the governor that charter schools can prove to be catalysts in the restructuring of our public schools. Charter schools can serve as another vehicle in the creation of innovative and diverse educational settings for our students. The Educational Improvement Panel, a panel of broadly represented Connecticut citizens created in response to the Connecticut Supreme Court decision in *Sheff v. O'Neill*, saw charter schools as one vehicle in the reduction of racial isolation. This recommendation resulted in amendments to the charter school legislation which give preference to charter school proposals that reduce racial and economic isolation of students.

Through a *charter* granted by the State Board of Education, a private entity or a coalition of private individuals is given the public authority to run an independent public school which is legally autonomous from the local school district. If developed properly, charter schools can create opportunities for improved student learning and academic excellence for *all* students by allowing for flexibility in the design of each school's educational program without compromising accountability for success.

Much excitement and momentum has been building since the passage of Connecticut's charter school legislation. In 1996, the first year of implementation, the State Board of Education received 29 applications from groups made up of teachers, parents, community members, higher education faculty, and private organizations from across the state. The Board chartered twelve schools; ten were state charter schools and two were local charter schools. Approval of these schools authorized the enrollment number of 1,000 students in charter schools, the enrollment cap enacted by the legislature. During 1997 the legislature removed the cap and provided funding for 500 additional seats in 1998-99. This allowed for enrollment growth in the existing schools and some modest increase in the number of new schools. Currently, fourteen state charter schools are serving approximately 2,693 students throughout Connecticut. State charter schools are funded by a per-pupil grant from the General Assembly which, for the current year, is \$7,250. In May of 2004, \$110 was added to the \$7,250 per pupil grant for this fiscal year.

**The State Department of Education is now soliciting applications for state and local charter schools.** This document serves as the State Board of Education's application package for all requests for state charter status. Along with preliminary and background information, it contains the application, frequently asked questions and answers, a copy of the amended legislation, and other information to help you in the development of your charter school.

### A. Request for Applications

Applications are being sought for the possible creation of new state and local charter schools. Funding is not available currently for new state charter schools. However, it is possible that a state budget will be passed in the spring of 2005 which *may* include additional monies for new state charter schools. State charter applicants may not know if there is funding available for new state charter schools until the state budget is passed in the 2005 session of the General Assembly, which is not scheduled to end until June 2005. Local charter schools receive funds directly from their sponsoring districts and thus do not rely on the state budget for funding.

Currently fourteen charter schools are in operation. The number of students who attend state charter schools is limited by the amount of funding enacted by the Connecticut General Assembly. There is no limit on the number of students enrolled in local charter schools. In reviewing charter applications, emphasis will be placed on the development of high academic standards and improved educational achievement for students, and on reduction of racial, ethnic and economic isolation of students.

The purpose of these materials is to provide potential applicants with guidelines and information for submitting an application for a charter. The application contains specific criteria that will be used in assessing the quality of each response to questions in the application. Requests for an application can be made to Mark Linabury, Charter School Program Manager at (860) 713-6588 or at [mark.linabury@po.state.ct.us](mailto:mark.linabury@po.state.ct.us).

## B. Expectations

Each applicant must produce a **complete** charter application that addresses all the elements required by law in order to be reviewed by the screening committee. Any incomplete application will be returned to the applicant. The applicant's proposal for a charter school must present a powerful vision as well as functional details that provide a blueprint for the school's operation. Strong fiscal accountability for the public funds used by the school must be evident.

Charter schools represent a tremendous opportunity to work collaboratively with a broad group of people which may include parents, teachers, business and local community members, and the expectation is that the application will be developed by such a group.

## C. Application

The application process for the Connecticut Charter School Program is designed to be simple and focused. Charter school applicants will have several months to complete their applications, although it is expected that applicants started their planning process prior to the issuance of this application.

1. *Statement of Intent:* We are requesting that applicants complete a Statement of Intent (included in this package) and submit it by **Monday, January 3, 2005**. Receipt of this document allows the State Department of Education to plan adequately for the review process and to place you on the Department's mailing list.
2. *State Charter Application:* Applications are due to the Connecticut State Department of Education on or before **March 18, 2005**. The State Board of Education must vote on the complete application within seventy-five days of receipt of such application and it is anticipated that it will act on the approval of charter applications on a staggered basis depending on when an application is filed. Therefore, applications filed earlier than the deadline will receive consideration sooner than those filed close to or at the deadline. A copy must also be filed with the local or regional school board in the town where the school will be located.
3. *Local Charter Application:* Applications are due to **both** the local board of education and the State Board of Education on or before **March 18, 2005**. The local board must vote on the application within sixty days of receipt of such application. If approved, the local board shall forward the application to the State Board of Education immediately upon passage. The State Board of Education must vote on the complete application within seventy-five days of receipt of such application and it is anticipated that it will act on the approval of charter applications on a staggered basis depending on when the application is filed.

## D. Application Review Process

The review process for each charter school application has four components: review of the proposal for completeness; review of the proposal for substance; public hearing; and possible interview with the Commissioner of Education. Each component is discussed below.

### 1. Review of Written Proposal

**Review:** Applications will be evaluated by State Department of Education staff. During this review, representatives of each applicant may be expected to meet with the review team to discuss the proposal and answer any questions the team may have about the proposal. If needed, specific meeting times and location will be sent to the applicants at the appropriate time.

**Review Criteria:** Applications will be scored by readers based on the criteria established in Section 10-66bb (d). (See the "Review Criteria" listed below each application requirement and the "Application Evaluation Criteria"). As required by statute, the Department of Education will give special consideration to applicants who will serve students who reside in a priority school district pursuant to section 10-266p of the Connecticut General Statutes or in a district in which seventy-five per cent or more of the enrolled students are members of racial or ethnic minorities. Preference will also be given to applicants for state charter schools that will be located at a work-site or that are sponsored by institutions of higher education. In determining whether to grant a charter, the review will consider the effect of the proposed charter school on the reduction of racial, ethnic, and economic isolation in the region in which it is to be located, the

regional distribution of charter schools in the state, and the potential of multiple charter schools within a school district or in contiguous school districts.

## **2. Review Completeness**

Each applicant must produce a **complete** charter application that addresses all the elements required by law in order to be reviewed by the screening committee. Any incomplete application will be returned to the applicant. The applicant's proposal for a charter school must present a powerful vision as well as functional details that provide a blueprint for the school's operation. Strong fiscal accountability for the public funds used by the school must be evident.

Charter schools represent a tremendous opportunity to work collaboratively with a broad group of people which may include parents, teachers, business and local community members, and the expectation is that the application will be developed by such a group.

## **3. Public Hearings:**

There will be an opportunity for the public to comment on the merits of each application. The hearings will be convened by members of the State Board of Education, or the local board of education if the application is for a local charter, and take place in the town in which the proposed charter school would be located. The hearings will take place on weekday evenings from 6:00 PM to 8:00PM at a date and location determined by the State Department of Education.

## **4. Interviews with the Commissioner of Education:**

Representatives of each charter applicant may be required to meet with the Commissioner and should be prepared to answer questions about all aspects of their program, especially in the areas of governance, finances, facility, staffing, curriculum, mission and students.

## **E. Obligations**

All applicants are hereby notified that any grant awarded by this agency is subject to contract compliance requirements set forth in Connecticut General Statutes Section 4a-60 and 40-60a and Sections 4a-68j-1 et seq. of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

Furthermore, the grantee may be required to submit periodic reports of its employment and sub-contracting practices in such form, in such manner and at such time as may be prescribed by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

## **F. Affirmative Action**

In accordance with the regulations established by the State Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, each applicant who receives an approved charter will be required to have a completed Affirmative Action Packet on file with the State Department of Education or must complete an Affirmative Action packet and submit it with this document to:

Affirmative Action Office  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
165 Capitol Avenue, Room 336  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
Telephone: (860) 713-6530

## **G. Freedom of Information**

All of the information contained in an application submitted in response to this Request for Application is subject to the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Connecticut General Statutes (Public Records and Meetings and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Sections 1-200 et seq. of the Connecticut General Statutes). The FOIA declares that except as provided by federal law or state statute, records maintained or kept on file by any public agency (as defined in the statute) are public records and every person has the right to inspect such records and receive a copy of such records.

## **H. Management Control of the Program and Consultation Role of SDE Personnel**

The grantee will have complete management control of any grant awarded. While the SDE staff may be consulted for their expertise, they will not be directly responsible for the selection of sub-grantees or vendors, nor will they be directly involved in the expenditure and payment of funds.

## **I. Reservation**

The State Department of Education reserves the right to make awards under this program without discussion with the applicant. Therefore, applications should represent the applicant's best effort from both a technical and cost standpoint. A pre-award conference may be held with finalists.

**The Commissioner of Education reserves the right to waive any of the formalities of this application process in the best interest of the program.**

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## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

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### **CONNECTICUT CHARTER SCHOOL LEGISLATION**

Charter school laws vary significantly from state to state. Across the country, charter schools have been declared one of the fastest growing innovations in education policy. For Connecticut, charter schools represent a means to provide flexibility to new schools in designing ways to improve student learning and meet specific educational goals. As we move to implement our education reform agenda, they can be a mechanism for the development of innovative programs within public education, providing additional opportunities for improved student learning.

Sections 10-66aa to 10-66hh, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, constitute the charter school legislation for the state of Connecticut. The original legislation was enacted in May 1996 and signed by the Governor on June 6, 1996.

### **CHARTER SCHOOLS DEFINED**

A charter school, as defined by the statutes, is a public, nonsectarian school which is established under a charter granted pursuant to the provisions of the statutes, organized as a nonprofit entity under state law, acts as a public agency, and operates independently of any local or regional local board of education in accordance with the terms of its charter and the provisions of the statutes. No member or employee of a governing council may have a personal or financial interest in the assets, real or personal, of the school.

A "state charter school" is a new public school approved by the State Board of Education.

A "local charter school" is a public school or part of a public school that is converted into a charter school and is approved by the local or regional board of education of the school district in which it is located and by the State Board of Education.

### **CHARTER SCHOOL PROCESS AND ELIGIBILITY**

**Eligibility.** Any person, association, corporation, organization or other entity, public or independent institution of higher education, local or regional board of education or two or more boards of education cooperatively, or regional educational service center may apply to the Commissioner of Education to establish a charter school. However, no nonpublic elementary or secondary school may be established as a charter school and no parent or group of parents providing home instruction may establish a charter school for such instruction. No member or employee of a governing council may have a personal or financial interest in the assets, real or personal, of the school.

**Limits.** No state charter school may enroll more than two hundred-fifty students or twenty-five per cent of the enrollment of the school district in which the state charter school is to be located, whichever is less, except in the case of a kindergarten to eight school, which may enroll up to three hundred students.

**Preferences and considerations.** The State Board of Education shall give preference to applicants who will serve students who reside in a priority school district pursuant to section 10-266p of the Connecticut General Statutes or in

a district in which seventy-five per cent or more of the enrolled students are members of racial or ethnic minorities. The State Board of Education shall also give preference to applicants for state charter schools that will be located at a work-site or that are institutions of higher education. In determining whether to grant a charter, the State Board of Education shall consider the effect of the proposed charter school on the reduction of racial, ethnic, and economic isolation in the region in which it is to be located, the regional distribution of charter schools in the state, and the potential of over concentration of charter schools within a school district or in contiguous school districts.

## **APPLICATION CONTENTS**

**Contents.** Charter school applications shall include a description of:

1. the mission, purpose and any specialized focus of the proposed charter school;
2. the interest in the community for the establishment of the charter school;
3. the school governance and procedures for the establishment of a governing council which includes teachers, parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school, and which must be responsible for the oversight of charter school operations;
4. the financial plan for the operation of the school, provided no application fees or other fees for attendance may be charged, except where provided in the statutes;
5. the educational program, instructional methodology, and services to be offered to students;
6. the number and qualifications of teachers and administrators to be employed by the school;
7. the organization of the school in terms of ages or grades to be taught and the total estimated enrollment of the school;
8. the student admissions criteria and procedures to: (a) ensure effective public information; (b) ensure open access on a space available basis; (c) promote a diverse student body; and (d) ensure that the school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, athletic performance or proficiency in the English language, provided the school may limit enrollment to a particular grade level or specialized educational focus and, if there is not space available for all students seeking enrollment, the school may give preference to siblings but shall otherwise determine enrollment by a lottery;
9. a means to assess student performance that includes participation in state-wide mastery examinations pursuant to Chapter 163c of the Connecticut General Statutes;
10. procedures for teacher evaluation and professional development for teachers and administrators;
11. the provision of school facilities, pupil transportation and student health and welfare services including special education;
12. procedures to encourage involvement by parents and guardians of enrolled students in student learning, school activities and school decision-making;
13. efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the staff; and
14. a five-year plan to sustain the maintenance and operation of the school.

**Waivers.** Charter schools shall be subject to all state and federal statutes and regulations which govern public schools. However, an application may include or a charter school may file requests to waive provisions of the statutes and regulations not specifically required by the charter school legislation, and which are within the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education. A summary of the most important mandates found in the State Education Statutes is attached (see Appendix E). Please note that there are other requirements in state and federal law.

## REVIEW PROCESS

**State charter schools.** An application for the establishment of a state charter school must be submitted to the State Board of Education for approval and filed with the local or regional board of education in the school district in which the state charter school is to be located. The state board will: (a) review the application; (b) hold a public hearing on such application in the school district in which the school is to be located; (c) solicit and review comments on the application from the appropriate local or regional board of education and from the local or regional boards of education for school districts that are contiguous to the district in which such school is to be located; and (d) vote on a complete application within seventy-five days of receipt of the application. The State Board of Education may approve an application and grant the charter for the state charter school by a majority vote of the members of the state board present and voting at a regular or special meeting of the state board called for such purpose. Charters will be granted for the period of time requested in the application or five years, whichever is less.

**Local charter schools.** An application for the establishment of a local charter school must be submitted to the local or regional board of education of the school district in which the local charter school is to be located for approval. The local or regional board of education must: (a) review the application; (b) hold a public hearing in the school district regarding the application; (c) survey teachers and parents in the school district to determine if there is sufficient interest in the establishment and operation of the local charter school; and (d) vote on a complete application no later than sixty days after the date of receipt. The board of education may approve the application by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a regular or special meeting called for such purpose. If the application is approved, the board must forward the application to the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education will vote on the application not later than seventy-five days after the date of receipt. The State Board of Education may approve the application and grant the charter for the local charter school for up to five years and may allow the applicant to delay its opening for a period of up to one school year for the applicant. The State Board of Education may condition the opening of such school on the school's meeting certain conditions determined by the Commissioner of Education to be necessary and may authorize the Commissioner to release the charter when the Commissioner determines such conditions are met.

## RENEWAL

Charters may be renewed by the State Board of Education, upon application, in accordance with the provisions of the charter school legislation for the granting of new charters. The State Board of Education may commission an independent appraisal of the performance of a charter school and consider the results of any such appraisal in determining whether to renew a charter. The State Board of Education may decline to renew a charter if (1) sufficient student progress has not been demonstrated, (2) the governing council has not been sufficiently responsible for the operation of the school or has misused or spent public funds in a manner that is detrimental to the educational interests of its students; or (3) the school has not been in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

## PROBATION AND REVOCATION

The Commissioner of Education may place a school on probation if: (1) the school has failed to (A) adequately demonstrate student progress; (B) failed to comply with the terms of its charter or with applicable laws and regulations; (C) achieve measurable progress in reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation; or (D) maintain its nonsectarian status; or (2) the governing council has demonstrated an inability to provide effective leadership to oversee the operation of the charter school or has not ensured that public funds are expended prudently or in a manner required by law. A charter school placed on probation must file a corrective action plan and operate pursuant to it for the period of probation, which may be up to one year. The probationary period may be extended for an additional year. The commissioner must notify parents or guardians of students attending the school of the probationary status and the reasons therefore, and may require the school to file interim reports on matters relevant to the probation.

The State Board of Education may revoke a charter if a school has failed to (1) comply with the terms of probation, including the failure to file or implement a corrective action plan; (2) demonstrate satisfactory student progress, as determined by the commissioner; (3) comply with the terms of its charter or applicable laws and regulations; or (4) manage its public funds in a prudent or legal manner. Unless an emergency exists, the State Board of Education must provide the governing council of the charter school a list of the reasons for the revocation, and an opportunity to demonstrate compliance with all the requirements for the retention of its charter. If an emergency exists, the State Board may revoke the charter and provide the governing council with a subsequent opportunity to demonstrate compliance.

## PERSONNEL ISSUES

For purposes of charter school legislation, “school professional” means school teacher, administrator or other personnel certified by the State Board of Education in accordance with its certification statutes and regulations.

**Certification.** Anyone providing instruction or pupil services in a charter school must possess a valid, appropriate Connecticut certificate on the day the school begins operation. At least half of these employees must be certified through the regular route. The remaining 50% may hold a nonrenewable interim certificate. (See Question and Answer section in this application for more information.) The commissioner cannot consider any requests for waiver of the certification or collective bargaining requirements set out in the general statutes.

**Collective bargaining.** The school professionals employed by a local charter school will be members of the appropriate bargaining unit of the local or regional school district in which the local charter school is located and shall be subject to the same collective bargaining agreement as the school professionals employed in that district. Consistent with the terms and conditions of the approved charter, however, the collective bargaining agreement may be modified by a majority of those employed or to be employed and by a majority of the members of the governing council, of the local charter school. The state charter school governing council shall act as a board of education for purposes of collective bargaining. Employees of a state charter school may choose not to form a collective bargaining unit nor to bargain collectively.

**Entitlements.** School professionals employed by a local or regional board of education shall be entitled to a two-year leave of absence, without compensation, in order to be employed in a charter school. Leaves shall be extended upon request for an additional two years. At any time during or upon the completion of such a leave of absence, a school professional may return to work in the school district in the position in which he or she was previously employed or a comparable position. Issues regarding tenure and seniority of staff are specifically addressed in the act.

**Retirement system.** Qualified school professionals employed in a charter school, may participate in the state teacher retirement system on the same basis as if such professional were employed by a local or regional board of education. The governing council of a charter school is required to make those contributions.

## FUNDING

**Student count.** For the purposes of education equalization aid, a student enrolled in a local charter school *shall* be considered a student enrolled in the school district in which he or she resides. For the purposes of education equalization aid, students enrolled in state charter school *shall not* be considered a student enrolled in the school district in which he resides.

**Payment amount and schedule.** For those enrolled in a local charter school, the local board of education of the school district in which a student resides shall pay annually, in accordance with its charter, to the fiscal authority for the charter school for each student the amount specified in its charter including reasonable special education costs. For a state charter school, the state will pay annually to the fiscal authority, for each student enrolled in such school seven thousand two hundred and fifty dollars (\$7,250). In addition, \$110 was added to the \$7250 per pupil grant for this fiscal year. Payment shall be made as follows: twenty-five per cent of the grant amount in July and September based on estimated student enrollment on May first, and twenty-five percent of such amount in January and the remaining amount in April, each based on student enrollment as of first day of October of the current school year.

**Special education.** In the case of a student identified as requiring special education, the school district in which the student resides shall: (a) hold the planning and placement team (PPT) meeting for the student and invite a representative from the charter school to participate in the meeting; and (b) pay the state charter school an amount equal to the difference between the reasonable cost of educating the student and the sum of the amount received by the state charter school for the student from state, federal, local, or private sources calculated on a per pupil basis. Payments must be made on a quarterly basis. Charter Schools are responsible for ensuring that students receive the service mandated in their IEPs.

**Grants eligibility.** Charter schools shall be eligible to the same extent as boards of education for federal funds and competitive state grants. Charter schools are also eligible to participate in the short-term investment fund (STIF) administered by the State Treasurer. If the Commissioner of Education finds that a charter school uses a grant in a

way that is inconsistent with the provisions of the charter school legislation, then the Commissioner may require repayment of the grant to the state.

**Year end rollover.** If at the end of a fiscal year, money received from the state charter school grant by a state charter school is unexpended, the charter school: (a) may use, for the expenses of the charter school for the following year, up to ten per cent of such amounts; and (b) may create a reserve fund to finance a specific capital or equipment purchase or another specified project as may be approved by the Commissioner, and may deposit into such fund up to five per cent of such unexpended state grant fund amounts.

## TRANSPORTATION

The local board of education of the school district in which the charter school is located shall provide transportation services for students of the charter school who reside in such school district unless the charter school makes other arrangements for such transportation. Any local or regional board of education may provide transportation services to a student attending a charter school outside of the district in which the student resides and, if it elects to provide such transportation, shall be reimbursed for a portion of the reasonable cost of such transportation services at the same percentage rate and in the same manner as school districts are reimbursed for regular transportation costs.

## ANNUAL REPORTING

The governing council of a charter school must annually submit a school profile as described in subsection (c) of C.G.S. § 10-220 to the Commissioner of Education. In addition, the governing council of a charter school must annually submit to the Commissioner of Education: (a) the educational progress of students in the school; (b) the financial condition of the school, including a certified audit statement of all revenues and expenditures; (c) accomplishment of the mission and any specialized focus of the charter school; and (d) the racial and ethnic composition of the student body and efforts taken to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body.

### Administrative Requirements

The State Department of Education requires education related forms to be completed by public schools in Connecticut. Charter schools are not exempted from submitting any ED Forms. However, not all of the forms in the Data Acquisition Plan apply to charters (e.g. since charter schools can not receive state school construction funds, none of those forms are required) and some of the forms are grade level and/or program specific. Below is a list of forms we anticipate you will be required to file with the State Department of Education.

Type of ED Form	Required	Approx. Number Required
Mandated Annually By State or Federal Statute	All	11
Data Collections Needed to Implement State or Federal Statutes	Some	3
Forms Required to Initiate or Change Individual Teacher Certification Status	As Needed	8
General State/Federal Aid Grants	Cash Management Forms Only	3
School Construction Grants	None	0
Child Nutrition Grants	As Needed	2
Federal Title I Grants	None	0
State and Federal Special Education Grants	As Needed	1
Bilingual and Immigrant Education Grants	As Needed	4
Adult Education Grants	As Needed	4
Vocational Education Grants	As Needed	1
Other Annual Grant-Related Data Collections	Some	1

## Activities Required by the State Department of Education

Site Visits and Reports	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year
Informal Site Visit	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Review of School Fundamentals Visit and Report	yes	no	no	yes	no
Corrective Action Plan Follow-Up and Report	no	yes	if needed	if needed	if needed
Comprehensive Site Visit and Report	no	no	yes	no	no
Renewal Site Visit	no	no	no	Round I	Round II

Documentation	When
Charter School Annual Reports	every year
State Department of Education Forms Required of All Public Schools	every year
Independent Financial Audit	every year
Renewal Application	Year 4 or 5

This plan is designed to give the Commissioner and State Board of Education sufficient information for proper oversight of the charter school initiative and to give individual charter schools the opportunity to demonstrate the accomplishment of their unique educational mission and the stability of their organization. This, in turn, provides the Connecticut General Assembly with sufficient evidence to show that the Connecticut charter school initiative is fulfilling the legislature's vision.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Powers of the governing council.** The governing council of a charter school may: (a) contract or enter into other agreements for purposes of administrative or other support services, transportation, plant services, or leasing facilities or equipment; and (b) receive and expend private funds or public funds, including funds from local or regional boards of education.

**Powers of the charter school.** A charter school may: (a) sue and be sued; (b) purchase, receive, hold and convey real and personal property for school purposes; and (c) borrow money for such purposes.

## CONCLUSION

This overview attempts to highlight the charter school law. In the case of variance between the language in the law and this summary, the law prevails (see Appendix C). For your reference, attached is a list of frequently asked questions and answers that should serve as guidelines as you contemplate the development of a charter school.

## STATEMENT OF INTENT TO SUBMIT A CONNECTICUT CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

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Please complete the section below, if you intend to submit an application to operate a state or local charter school in response to Sections 10-66aa through 10-66hh of the Connecticut General Statutes as amended. Completion of this statement of intent does not obligate the applicant in any way. It is solely meant to give the State Department of Education an indication of interest and to prepare for the application review process. Completion of this form will also place you on the Department's charter school mailing list. **This form is due by Monday, January 3, 2005.**

Please forward to:

Charter School Office, Room 364  
Office of the Commissioner  
CT Department of Education  
P.O. Box 2219  
Hartford, CT 06145-2219  
FAX (860) 713-7021

Name of Proposed School	
Name of Contact Person	
Organization	
Address	
City, State, Zip Code	
Telephone	
FAX	
E-mail	
Names and Organizational Affiliation of Founders	
Please indicate whether applying for a state or local charter school	
If a local charter, list the local school district	
Towns to be served by school	

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## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

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### *Application Format*

Applications for the charter schools must be typewritten or word processed (on one side of 8.5" x 11" sized paper). The application should follow the format and the order outlined, with the Application Summary attached at the front of the application and tabs for each section. To facilitate the review process, please include a table of contents labeling and paginating each section. In addition to the required information, applicants may include any additional information which will help to better assess the proposed charter school. Attach all supporting documentation as appendices which should be referenced in the body of the application.

Succinct answers should be provided. Text should be printed using a readable font (10 or 12 point).

### *Number of Copies*

An original and five copies must be submitted to the State Department of Education for state charter school applications. For local charter schools, an additional original must be submitted to the district's superintendent. For state charter schools, a copy of the application must be filed at the local or regional board of education.

### *Due Date*

The original must be signed and dated by an authorized official. Applications (original and five copies), **IRRESPECTIVE OF POSTMARK DATE** and means of transmittal, must be received by **4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 18, 2005**.

### *Submission*

**Both state and local charter school applications** must be submitted to both the *superintendent of schools* in which the charter school will be located and the *Charter School Office* at the address indicated below.

Please mail application to:

Charter School Office  
Office of the Commissioner  
CT Department of Education  
P.O. Box 2219  
Hartford, CT 06145-2219

Deliver to:

Charter School Office, Room 364  
Office of the Commissioner  
CT Department of Education  
165 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06145-2219

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## CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION SUMMARY

This application summary will be used by the State Department of Education for a quick analysis and administrative processing of the applications received. This information provided must be an accurate representation of the application and must correspond to the information provided in the body of the application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Proposed Charter School Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Location (city/town)

### Charter Applicant Representative:

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

#### TYPE OF SCHOOL

Local charter school ☐

State charter school ☐

Indicate number of persons involved in each category

#### FOUNDERS

Parents:

Teaching Staff:

Business Community:

Community Organization:

Higher Education Institution:

Others:

#### FACILITY

YES

NO

Do you presently have access to a facility suitable for a school?

When will you be able to take occupancy?

Date

#### PROJECTED STUDENT ENROLLMENT

	PreK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Year 1															
Year 2															
Year 3															
Year 4															
Year 5															
<b>Total</b>															

**Executive Summary:** Please provide a one-to two-page descriptive summary which highlights the primary characteristics of the proposed charter school including pertinent information included in the application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Charter Applicant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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# CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

Please answer the following questions, as thoroughly and clearly as possible, in the format provided. If you are unable to provide a specific answer to a question, please describe the process and timeline by which you will address the issue raised. Following each question is a brief description of the standards which will be used to review your application. They are not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive, but rather should serve as a guide as you formulate your responses.

## I. SCHOOL VISION AND DESIGN

### 1. Mission and Vision

- A. Describe the basic mission of your charter school. Describe the core philosophy or underlying purpose of the proposed school. The mission should reveal the unique attributes the school will strive to achieve. (e.g. type of school, students served, etc.)
- B. Identify and describe any specific area of concentration or theme in which your charter school may be focused (i.e., science, technology, service-learning, or arts).
- C. Within the context of your mission, describe the overarching goals which your charter school will seek to attain.

**Review Criteria:** *Clearly articulated vision for an innovative public school that will lead to improved education outcomes; consistency between the stated mission and the educational programs as a means to achieve this.*

### 2. Learning Objectives

- A. Describe the school's broad academic goals and objectives for student learning in measurable terms. (Bear in mind that these will be closely linked to student assessment. See Section 4, Student Assessment, under School Vision and Design.)
- B. Describe other learning objectives which influence student performance, such as, but not limited to, positive self-concept, motivation and persistence, responsibility and self-reliance, intellectual curiosity, positive interpersonal relationships and sense of community.

**Review Criteria:** *Clear measurable goals which serve as the basis for the school's educational program; standards which reflect a commitment to academic excellence for all students.*

### 3. Educational Program

- A. What will students be required to know and be able to do? Provide a detailed overview of the core academic program in language arts (reading, writing, grammar, speaking and listening); social studies (citizenship, government, history, geography, and economics); mathematics, science, physical education and health, and the arts (music, visual arts, theater and dance). In addition, at the secondary level, include one or more world languages and applied education/school-to-career opportunities.
- B. What teaching methods will be used? Describe how this pedagogy will enhance student learning and contribute to real growth in student achievement.
- C. Describe any partnerships which would enhance high student achievement through support services, health, nutrition, counseling, community service, school/business partnerships, etc.

**Review Criteria:** *Sound teaching methods and curricular approaches; innovation in student learning and teaching methodology; curriculum that is planned, ongoing, systematic and consistent with the mission and goals and the student population to be served, and promotes high academic achievement.*

### 4. Student Assessment

- A. Describe the method of assessing what students know and are able to do when they first arrive at your school. What data will you use or gather to be the baseline for demonstrating the educational progress of your students?

- B. Describe the multiple methods of assessing whether students are meeting the learning objectives and goals of your charter school (See Learning Objectives, Section 2, under School Vision and Design.
- C. Describe provisions for the participation of all students in the appropriate statewide mastery examinations (CMT, CAPT) and other alternate assessments for students through the PPT process.
- D. How will your charter school address the needs of students who do not perform at acceptable levels of proficiency on the state-wide examinations?
- E. Describe any assessment indicators your charter school will establish which are in addition to those established by law [Chapter 163 of the CT General Statutes].

**Review Criteria:** *A commitment to high academic standards for all students, well-developed assessment mechanisms which demonstrate that student assessment is consistent with the overall mission and learning objectives of your school and is in compliance with the requirement to participate in the state mastery examinations; a commitment to the measurement of learning outcomes; and use of the assessment data for the demonstration of educational progress of students and program improvement.*

#### 5. Efforts to Reduce Racial, Ethnic, and Economic Isolation

- A. Describe the efforts your charter school will make to reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation. Consider possible programs (e.g. curricular and extra-curricular and/or student/teacher recruitment.)

**Review Criteria:** *A commitment to the reduction of racial, ethnic, and economic isolation in the areas of program and student recruitment.*

## II. STRENGTH OF ORGANIZATIONAL EFFORT

### 1. Description of Founders

- A. Provide information on the founders of the proposed charter school, including their names, background, experiences, relevant certifications or licenses, and corporate or business affiliations.
- B. Describe the existing governing/decision-making body(ies). Attach resumes and references for the applicants and resumes for existing and proposed members of the Governing Board of the school.
- C. Describe any partnerships founders have with existing public schools, institutions of higher education, private entities, and/or community groups.
- D. Include any plans for future recruitment of Governing Board members.

**Review Criteria:** *A well balanced group which brings together people of diverse backgrounds and experiences and a range of professional skills capable of the organizational, financial, pedagogical, legal, and other tasks required to open a functioning public school; local representation; community and parent involvement. If applicable, the involvement of any higher education institution should be clearly stated.*

### 2. School Management and Governance

- A. Describe the procedures for the establishment of the governing board and the approval and orientation of new board members.
- B. Specify the roles and responsibilities of the board, including the involvement of teachers, parents, and students in the governance of the school.
- C. Describe the internal form of management that will be implemented at the school, including any plans to contract with an outside group to manage the school.
- D. Include an organizational chart of the governance and management of the school. Indicate the relationship among different decision-making bodies.

- E. Describe how the governing board will exercise oversight and responsibility for the overall operation of the school, including but not limited to finances, personnel, policy-making, mission, and physical plant.

**Review Criteria:** *Clearly defined roles of the governing board; teacher and parent input in school decision-making; well developed, viable management structure.*

### **3. Evidence of Support**

- A. Illustrate the scope of community support for the proposed charter school and its founders. Document through letters of support, surveys, petitions or other means, the endorsement of teachers, parents, students, business, community members and institutional leaders.

**Review Criteria:** *Evidence that the proposed school is welcomed in the broader community, and confidence that the program is being offered as an attractive educational alternative.*

**\*Local board of education approval of state charter school applications is NOT required.**

## **III. STUDENT COMPOSITION, SERVICES, AND POLICIES**

### **1. School Demographics**

- A. Describe the community where the school will be located.
- B. Define the school calendar, school day schedule and hours of operation.
- C. What grade range or ages will your charter school serve? How many students are expected to be in each grade or grouping? What is the minimum enrollment in each grade or grouping?
- D. What is the school's projected enrollment for each year covered by your charter request? What is the school's ultimate enrollment goal by grade and grouping?
- E. Describe any unique demographic characteristics of the student population to be served, including racial and ethnic composition or primary languages spoken.

**Review Criteria:** *An understanding of, and sensitivity for, the students to be served and the community in which the school will be located; soundness of enrollment planning.*

### **2. Special Education**

- A. How will you ensure that IEP's of students with disabilities are implemented?
- B. Describe your plan to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are met. Include the following:
  - 1. Obtaining and reviewing student records;
  - 2. Providing services for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) beginning on the first day of school;
  - 3. Referring students whom you suspect of being disabled. (For instance, you may describe your charter school's child study team or student assistance team model.)

**Review Criteria:** *Compliance with federal and state laws; ability to accommodate special needs students in the school program.*

### **3. Teaching English Language Learners**

- A. Explain how your school will serve English language learners.

**Review Criteria:** *Compliance with federal and state laws; ability to accommodate students with limited English proficiency in the school program.*

### **4. Admissions Policy and Criteria**

- A. Describe the student admissions policy and criteria.
- B. Discuss the process and timetable to ensure effective public information to attract a cross section of students.
- C. Describe the process and timetable to be used for admitting students, including a plan for the admission lottery or other random selection.

- D. Explain how these policies further the mission of the school in a non-discriminatory manner.
- E. Describe how your charter school will seek to provide a diverse educational experience for students.
- F. Describe how your charter school will impact the reduction of racial, ethnic, and economic isolation in the region where the school will be located.

**Review Criteria:** *Compliance with enrollment requirements detailed in the legislation; consistency with the charter schools mission and educational program and the students' unique educational and personal needs; admissions policy which fosters a diverse student body and non-discriminatory impact; a viable plan to attract students and maintain a school.*

#### **5. Student Discipline Policies**

- A. Describe rules or guidelines governing student behavior and discipline.
- B. Describe the school's policies and criteria regarding student expulsion and suspension, and the educational alternatives available to students who are expelled or suspended.

**Review Criteria:** *Clarity of expectations for student behavior; compliance with state laws; specific procedures for punitive actions.*

#### **6. Student Health and Welfare**

- A. Describe the school's plan for the provision of health and welfare services to students. Discuss what services will be provided and by whom. Indicate how the school intends to comply with applicable health and welfare statutory requirements.

**Review Criteria:** *Soundness of a plan or process to ensure compliance with the requirement for the provision of health and welfare services to students*

#### **7. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Charter schools are responsible to ensure that Section 504 is being implemented at the charter school. The school district in which the student resides is not responsible for ensuring 504 compliance for students enrolled at the charter school.

- A. Describe the school's plan to provide a free appropriate public education for those students with disabilities who are qualified as disabled under Section 504. Include evaluation procedures, identification procedures, provision of services through a written service plan and internal and external grievance procedures. Include the name/title of the 504 coordinator.

**Review Criteria:** *Compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; ability to meet the individual educational needs of students qualified under Section 504 as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students.*

## IV. SCHOOL VIABILITY AND ADMINISTRATION

### 1. Human Resources Policies and Information:

- A. Describe the criteria and standards to be followed in the hiring and dismissal process of teachers, administrators, and other school staff.
- B. Describe the targeted staff size and the teacher-to-student ratio.
- C. Describe the individual responsibilities of the charter school staff.
- D. Provide a copy of the certification endorsement for all classroom teachers including principals and professional support staff on or before the opening of school; also include a description of their proposed qualifications; indicate the number of staff who will pursue certification via the alternate route program (provides expedited certification through education and experience).
- E. Indicate how you will implement the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program.
- F. Describe the procedures for teacher evaluation and indicate who will evaluate staff.
- G. Describe the opportunities and resources (time, professional materials, staff leadership) for an ongoing, comprehensive, professional development process to improve the knowledge and skills of all educators for the purpose of increasing student success.
- H. Describe your human resources policies governing: salaries and fringe benefits, contracts, hiring and dismissal, affirmative action and benefit packages.

***Review Criteria:** High professional standards for teachers and other staff; commitment to the establishment of teacher evaluation and professional development; compliance with the certification requirements established in the charter school law.*

### 2. Building Options

- A. Describe your present options for a school building, including location, capacity and your timetable for identifying and acquiring it.
- B. Explain how this site would be a suitable facility for the proposed school, including any plans and associated timelines to renovate and bring the facility into compliance with all applicable school building codes.
- C. Describe financing plans for acquisition of the facility.

***Review Criteria:** A structured plan for identifying and acquiring a school facility.*

### 3. Financial Plan

- A. Devise a start-up budget covering the planning, start-up (e.g., furniture, equipment, media center, etc.) and capital expenses before school opening. Identify non-government sources and amounts of funds that will be used toward operating and start-up costs of the proposed charter school.
- B. Indicate if you plan to conduct any fund-raising efforts to generate capital or to supplement the per pupil allocations. If so, please explain.
- C. Using the attached budget instructions, prepare a pre-opening budget statement, a projected five year budget, and a schedule of borrowings and repayments. (The documents attached to the budget instructions are sample formats, not forms to be completed. Use a spreadsheet program to calculate and present the required budget statements.)
- D. Attach additional budget documents, e.g. a cash flow statement, balance sheet, salary and hiring schedule, etc.
- E. Discuss your plan for regular review of school budgets and financial records.

***Review Criteria:** The financial plan should reflect utilization of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and school operations chart of accounts; evidence of sound financial planning which will provide the basis for the fiscal viability of the school.*

### 4. Transportation

- A. Discuss plans for transporting students within the local school district to and from school. What arrangements, if any, have been made with the local school board/boards?

- B. If you plan to implement an extended-day or extended-year program which requires transportation beyond what the district provides, what arrangements will be made to transport these students?
- C. Indicate what transportation options are available for out-of-district students.

**Review Criteria:** *A pupil transportation plan for safely transporting students within the school district to and from school; a description of transportation options for all students, including those out of the district.*

## 5. Waiver Requests

Waivers of existing state statutes can be requested as a part of the application (Section 10-66bb (d) of the Connecticut General Statutes). Please describe and provide a justification for waivers of statutes that the school believes are necessary for the successful operation of the charter school. (See appendix for waiver form). Please note that the law specifically exempts certain statutes from waiver.

**Review Criteria:** *Clearly articulated request which advances the goals and objectives of the school and responds to the requirements of the charter school law.*

## 6. Charter School Self-Evaluation and Accountability\*

- A. Based on your mission statement and learning objectives, describe the school's self-assessment or evaluation design to ensure that the school is: 1) demonstrating educational progress of students; 2) meeting its stated mission and goals; 3) fiscally solvent and responsible; and 4) making efforts to reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation.
- B. Describe how you intend to hold your school accountable to both parents and other stakeholders.
- C. Describe the system your school will utilize to maintain school records and required information. How will the school share its annual report and other relevant information on the school's performance?

**Review Criteria:** *Results-oriented system of internal evaluation; measurable, school-wide goals and objectives in the areas described above; responsiveness to the community the school serves; assurance of submission of forms and participation in activities.*

\*Please note that the Annual Reports of the existing charter schools are posted on the State Department of Education's web site at [www.state.ct.us/sde](http://www.state.ct.us/sde) under "Charter School Information".

## 7. Timetable

Provide a detailed timetable of projected steps and dates leading to the opening of the charter school.

**Review Criteria:** *A well developed plan of action for the opening of the charter school.*

## V. PREFERENCES

***If you are claiming a preference for any of the following, complete the sections below:***

**1. Reduction of Racial, Ethnic, and Economic Isolation**

If you will be an interdistrict school, describe the percentage and number of students you plan to enroll from each district. Explain how your projected student body will effect the reduction of racial, ethnic, and economic isolation on your students, school, and the greater communities which you serve.

***Review Criteria:*** Amount of interaction and quality programming students of different backgrounds have together.

**2. Higher Education Institution**

Verify that the applicant is a higher education institution.

***Review Criteria:*** Applicant is a higher education institution.

**3. Priority School District or Districts with at least 75% Racial or Ethnic Minority Enrollment**

Explain approximately what percentage of students will be drawn from Priority School Districts or districts serving at least 75% racial and ethnic minority enrollment for the first five years.

***Review Criteria:*** Percentage of population drawn from priority schools districts or districts which enroll at least 75% of racial or ethnic minority populations..

**4. Location at a Work Site**

Describe the work site where the school would be located and who will be served.

***Review Criteria:*** Location of school at a work site.

**5. Serving an Underserved Geographic Location, Age/Grade Level, or Mission Not Addressed by Existing Charter Schools**

Describe how your charter school will serve underserved populations.

***Review Criteria:*** Uniqueness of proposal's geographic location, age/grade levels served, or mission relative to the existing charter schools.

## VI. DOCUMENTATION

***To be submitted prior to the granting of the charter:***

**1. Safety, Liability, and Insurance**

- A. Describe your school's insurance coverage plans, including health, automobile (for pupil transportation), general liability, property, officer and employee liability.
- B. Please submit written documentation of:
  - ? Signed copy of facility lease;
  - ? Inspection by a local building inspector;
  - ? Inspection by the local Fire Department;
  - ? Health inspection certificate; and
  - ? Compliance with all other federal and state health and safety laws and regulations.

**2. Governance and Other Documentation**

- A. Copies of incorporation documents.
- B. Board members' names and addresses. Identification of Governing Board officers.

## BUDGET INFORMATION

### CHARTER SCHOOL BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS

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The charter school application package must include, at a minimum, the three financial budget statements/schedules identified below:

1. *Pre-opening Budget Statement* (See attached format)  
This budget statement should detail estimated start-up activities that are **not** reflected in the school's projected five-year budget statement below. Budget narrative should accompany the detail line items in order to provide a full understanding of the budget estimations.
2. *Projected Five Year Budget Statement* (See attached format)  
This budget statement should detail the estimated financial activity of the school for the first five operating years. Budget narrative should accompany the detail line items in order to provide a full understanding of the budget estimations.
3. *Schedule of Borrowings and Repayments* (No suggested format)  
Please identify any estimated or actual funds borrowed (loans, notes, mortgages, etc.) including the source of the funds, the repayment schedule, and the purpose of the borrowing.

The above charter school budget statements were designed to keep financial reporting requirements at a minimum, while enabling compliance with monitoring standards and comparability to public school financial data. While not every school will utilize each revenue and expenditure category, these budgetary statements should assist the school in planning and monitoring financial performance. These financial budgets, however, should be part of a comprehensive financial control process that culminates in the preparation of estimated and actual financial statements (balance sheet, statement of revenue and expenses, statement of cash flows, etc.) **We encourage you to seek support from your financial advisor and/or CPA in preparing the above statements and in designing your financial control system.**

In addition to the above application requirements, each charter school must prepare and submit with its **Annual Report** to the Commissioner of Education, details of the school's financial condition. *This requires the charter school to develop and maintain fiscally responsible accounting records along with a strong system of internal controls.* Such financial records must be maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) on a modified accrual basis. Under this method, revenues are recognized when they become both measurable and available, and expenditures are recognized at the point at which they are incurred. Also, since most charter schools receive more than one grant from local, state, and federal government sources (e.g. the per pupil allotment, entitlement programs, and possibly competitive grants), the school must utilize fund accounting in accordance with GAAP in maintaining the school's accounting records. Fund accounting requires a self-balancing set of accounts insuring that revenues collected are spent for the intended purpose.

## Explanation of Budget Categories

---

### Revenue

Number of Students	estimated number of students enrolled
Per Pupil Revenue	number of students x per pupil amount
Student Entitlements	estimate value of entitlements e.g. Title I, II, IV, VI
Grants	include anticipated Federal and State Competitive grants
In-kind Services	match with the “other objects” category in the expense section
Private Contributions	

### Expenditures

#### *Salaries and Benefits*

Salary - Administrators	111A	full-time and part-time
Salary - Teachers	111B	full-time and part-time by each subject area taught
Salary - Other	112A	Educational Aides - full-time and part-time
Salary - Support Staff	112B	full-time and part-time
Benefits	200	amounts paid on behalf of employ. Over and above gross salaries

#### *Services and Activities*

In-service Staff Development	322	expenditures for staff development activities
Pupil Services	323	certified or licensed individual who serve students’ mental & physical needs not listed above under salaries and benefits
Field Trips	324	
Parent Activities	325	services for parents including workshops and seminars
Professional Tech Services	330	services performed by specialists, such as consultants
Accounting	330	
Audit	331	
Student Transportation	510	
Telephone	530	
Postage and Shipping	530	
Travel	580	expenses associated with staff travel

#### *Physical Plant*

Rent	400	rent (for mortgage payments use loan re-payment category)
Utilities	400	
Custodial Service	400	services performed by persons other than employees
Maintenance and Repairs	400	repair/ maint. services & materials not provided by school personnel
Renovations/ Expansion	400	costs associated with renovating and expanding physical plant

#### *Marketing and Development*

Advertising	590	for school handbooks, annual reports, brochures, etc.
Printing	590	for school handbooks, annual reports, brochures, etc.
Insurance	590	for all types of insurance other than employee benefits (general liability, property, etc.)

#### *Supplies and Equipment*

Supplies - Instructional	611	consumable items purchased for instructional use
Supplies - Administrative	612	consumable items directly related to non-inst. Program admin.
Supplies - General	690	
Computers	700	describe breakdown of computers for instruction vs. administration
Furniture	700	
Vehicles	700	
Other Equipment	700	machinery and other equipment not included above

#### *Other Objects*

Other Objects (e.g. in-kind)	800	costs for other objects not included above; also put “in-kind expenses” here to match “in kind services” above
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#### *Loan Re-Payments*

Interest	900	describe rate and terms
Principal	900	describe use of loan

---

**Pre-Opening Budget Statement Format**  
Start- Up Explanation of Revenues and Expenditures

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**Revenue**

Number of Students	\$0	
Per Pupil Revenue		
Student Entitlements		
Grants		for example: Federal Charter School Start Up Assistance grant
In-kind Services		
Private Contributions	-	for example: Foundation X grant for \$\$

**Total Revenue** \$0

**Expenditures**

*Salaries and Benefits*

Salary- Administrators	111A	\$0	for example: 10 weeks for 2 administrators
Salary- Teachers	111B	-	for example: 6 weeks for 5 teachers
Salary- Other	112A	-	
Salary- Support Staff	112B	-	
Benefits	200	-	

*Subtotal* \$0

*Services and Activities*

In-service Staff Development	322	\$0
Pupil Services	323	-
Field Trips	324	-
Parent Activities	325	-
Professional Tech Services	330	-
Accounting	330	-
Audit	331	-
Student Transportation	510	-
Telephone	530	-
Postage and Shipping	530	-
Travel	580	-

*Subtotal* \$0

*Physical Plant*

Rent	400	\$0
Utilities	400	-
Custodial Services	400	-
Maintenance and Repairs	400	-
Renovations/ Expansion	400	-

*Subtotal* \$0

*Marketing and Development*

Advertising	590	\$0
Printing	590	-
Insurance	590	-

*Subtotal* \$0

*Supplies and Equipment*

Supplies-Instructional	611	\$0
Supplies- Administrative	612	-
Supplies- General	690	-
Computers	700	-
Furniture	700	-
Vehicles	700	-
Other Equipment	700	-

*Subtotal* \$0

*Other Objects*

Other Objects (e.g. in- kind)	800	-
-------------------------------	-----	---

*Subtotal* \$0

*Loan Re-payments*

Interest	900	-
Principal	900	-

*Subtotal* \$0

**Total Expenditures** \$0

**INCOME LESS EXPENDITURES** \$0

---

**Projected Five Year Budget Statement Format**

		FY 1	FY 2	FY 3	FY 4	FY 5
<b>Revenue</b>						
Number of Students		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Per Pupil Revenue		-	-	-	-	-
Student Entitlements		-	-	-	-	-
Grants		-	-	-	-	-
In-kind Services		-	-	-	-	-
Private Contributions		-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>						
<b>Salaries and Benefits</b>						
Salary - Administrators	111A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Salary-Teachers	111B	-	-	-	-	-
Salary-Other	112A	-	-	-	-	-
Salary-Support Staff	112B	-	-	-	-	-
Benefits	200	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Services and Activities</b>						
In-service Development Staff	322	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Pupil Services	323	-	-	-	-	-
Field Trips	324	-	-	-	-	-
Parent Activities	325	-	-	-	-	-
Professional Tech Services	330	-	-	-	-	-
Accounting	330	-	-	-	-	-
Audit	331	-	-	-	-	-
Student Transportation	510	-	-	-	-	-
Telephone	530	-	-	-	-	-
Postage and Shipping	530	-	-	-	-	-
Travel	580	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Physical Plant</b>						
Rent	400	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Utilities	400	-	-	-	-	-
Custodial Services	400	-	-	-	-	-
Maintenance and Repairs	400	-	-	-	-	-
Renovations/ Expansion	400	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Marketing and Development</b>						
Advertising	590	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Printing	590	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance	590	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Supplies and Equipment</b>						
Supplies - Instructional	611	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies - Administrative	612	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies - General	690	-	-	-	-	-
Computers	700	-	-	-	-	-
Furniture	700	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicles	700	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment	700	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Other Objects</b>						
Other Objects (e.g. in-kind)	800	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Loan Re-payments</b>						
Interest	900	-	-	-	-	-
Principal	900	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>INCOME LESS EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

## **APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA POINT ASSIGNMENT**

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<b><u>APPLICATION COMPONENT</u></b>	<b><u>POINTS</u></b>
<b>School Vision and Design</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mission and Vision</li> <li>○ Learning Objectives</li> <li>○ Educational Program</li> <li>○ Student Assessment</li> <li>○ Efforts to Reduce Racial, Ethnic, and Economic Isolation</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>
<b>Strength of Organizational Effort</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Description of Founders</li> <li>○ School Management and Governance</li> <li>○ Evidence of Support</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>
<b>Student Composition, Services &amp; Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School Demographics</li> <li>○ Special Education</li> <li>○ Bilingual Education</li> <li>○ Admissions Policy &amp; Criteria</li> <li>○ Student Discipline Policies</li> <li>○ Student Health &amp; Welfare</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>
<b>School Viability &amp; Administration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Human Resources Policies &amp; Information</li> <li>○ Building Options</li> <li>○ Financial Plan</li> <li>○ Transportation</li> <li>○ Waiver Requests</li> <li>○ Charter School Self Evaluation/Accountability</li> <li>○ Timetable</li> <li>○ Administrative Requirements</li> </ul>	<b>20</b>
<b>Reduction of Racial, Ethnic &amp; Economic Isolation</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Higher Education Institution</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Priority School Districts or Districts with at least 75% Racial or Ethnic Minority Enrollment</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Location at Work-site</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Application is proposed for an underserved geographic location, age/grade level, or mission not previously addressed existing charter schools</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>

## CHARTER SCHOOLS QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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**Q. What are charter schools?**

- A. Charter schools are public, nonsectarian, independent schools which will operate independently of any local or regional board of education pursuant to a state or local charter. Each charter school must be organized as a nonprofit entity and will be considered a public agency for purposes of the Freedom of Information law. Conceptually, the goal for charter schools is to serve as centers for innovation and educational leadership to improve student performance and as a vehicle to reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation. Charter schools may have a specialized educational focus and may specify grade levels.

**Q. Are charter schools public schools?**

- A. Yes. Although charter schools may be created by private entities, they are public in function and character. They must provide free, non-sectarian education to students enrolled, and must be accessible to all children, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual preference, proficiency in English, physical or mental disability, or athletic achievement.

**Q. How does a school get a charter?**

- A. The State Board of Education may grant charters for local and state charter schools. Applications for local charters must first be made to the local board of education of the district in which the school will be located. The board must vote on the application after holding a public hearing and surveying teachers and parents to determine if there is sufficient local interest. If approved, the application must be forwarded to the State Board of Education for approval. Applications for state charters must be submitted to the State Board of Education which must vote on the application after holding a public hearing in the school district in which the school will be located and soliciting comments from the boards of education in which the school is to be located and those contiguous thereto.

**Q. How are charter schools governed?**

- A. Each charter school must have its own governing body. The law provides that charter school applications contain a description of the procedures to be used for the establishment of a governing council that includes teachers, parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school and which is responsible for the oversight of charter school operations. This governing body will act in much the same manner as a local school board. It will have overall responsibility for the operation and management of the school, including its curriculum, the development of staff and student policies, staffing and financial operation. No member or employee of a governing council may have a personal or financial interest in the assets, real or personal of the school.

**Q. Who can attend a charter school?**

- A. Charter schools must allow open access to all students and may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual preference, disability, athletic performance or proficiency in the English language. However, enrollment may be limited to particular grade levels. If more students apply than there are seats available, students are admitted by lottery. Charter schools may only give preference to siblings enrolled in the school.

**Q. Who can apply for a charter school?**

- A. Any person, association, corporation, organization or other entity, any public or independent institution of higher education, a local or regional board of education or two or more boards of education cooperatively, or a regional education service center may apply to establish a charter school. The law provides that no nonpublic elementary or secondary school may be converted to a charter school and no group of parents providing home instruction may establish a charter school for such instruction.

**Q. What is the difference between a local and state charter school?**

A. A local charter school is a public school or part of a public school that is converted into a charter school and is approved by the local or regional board of education of the school district in which it is located and by the State Board of Education. It is funded by the local school district. A state charter school is a new school approved by the State Board of Education and funded by the state.

**Q. Must the State Board of Education give any preferences in granting charters?**

A. Yes. The State Board of Education must give preference to applicants who will serve students who reside in a priority school district or in a district in which seventy-five per cent or more of the enrolled students are members of racial or ethnic minorities, or applicants for state charter schools which will be located at a work-site or which are institutions of higher education. In determining whether to grant a charter, the State Board of Education must consider the effect of the proposed school on the reduction of racial, ethnic and economic isolation in the region in which it is to be located, the regional distribution of charter schools in the state, and the potential of over concentration of charter schools within a school district or in contiguous school districts.

**Q. Since preference must be given to applicants for charter schools which are institutions of higher education, must these be Connecticut institutions?**

A. The law does not specify. Therefore, an application from any institution of higher education could be considered for a charter if all other requirements are met.

**Q. What laws are applicable to charter schools; can any laws be waived?**

A. All state and federal laws and regulations are applicable to charter schools. The State Board of Education may waive, upon application, any provisions of law which are under its jurisdiction, except for those laws concerning mastery testing, school health and sanitation, equal access and discrimination, teacher certification and collective bargaining. An application for a waiver should demonstrate why the granting of the waiver is necessary to the successful achievement of the mission and how it would assist in enhancing student achievement.

**Q. Are there limits on the number of charter schools which can be established?**

A. No. In determining whether to grant a charter, the State Board of Education must consider the effect of the proposed charter school on the reduction of racial, ethnic and economic isolation in the region in which it is to be located, the regional distribution of charter schools in the state and the potential of over concentration of charter schools within a school district or in contiguous school districts.

**Q. Are there limits on the numbers of students who can attend charter schools?**

A. Yes. No more than two hundred fifty students or twenty-five percent of the enrollment of the school district in which the school is located may be enrolled in a state charter school except that a kindergarten to grade eight school may enroll up to three hundred students. The total student population in all state charter schools will be determined by the level of funding enacted by the General Assembly. There is no limit on the number of students who attend local charter schools.

**Q. Who will oversee charter schools?**

A. Generally, the Commissioner of Education. All charter schools must submit annually to the Commissioner a report on the condition of the school, which shall include (1) the progress of its students; (2) its financial condition, including a certified audit statement of all revenues and expenditures; (3) the accomplishment of its mission, purpose and any specialized focus of the school, and (4) the racial and ethnic composition of the student body and efforts taken to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body. In the case of a local charter school, this report must also be submitted to the local board of education for the district in which the school is located.

**Q. How many charter schools are open?**

A. Fourteen state charter schools are now operating. A list of those charter schools is included in the application package.

**Q. How will charter schools be financed?**

- A. State charter schools receive \$7,250 per pupil. In addition, \$110 was added to the \$7,250 per pupil grant for this fiscal year. Local charter schools receive funding from the boards of education in which students attending the charter school reside. The amount to be paid will be specified in the charter and must include the reasonable special education costs of its students. Since local charter schools must be approved by the local or regional board of education prior to being submitted to the State Board, this amount will probably be determined by negotiation with the local or regional board involved. In addition, charter schools are eligible for competitive state grants administered by the State Department of Education and, in accordance with federal law, for any federal funds available for the education of pupils attending public schools.

**Q. Who is responsible for providing services and paying the cost of educating special education students?**

- A. Under the current law, the local board of education in which the student attending a charter school resides must (1) hold the planning and placement team meeting for such student and invite representatives from the charter school to participate, and (2) pay the state charter school, on a quarterly basis, an amount equal to the difference between the reasonable cost of educating such student and the sum of the amount received by the state charter school from all sources.

The charter school is ultimately responsible for implementing the student's IEP; however, since the local school district is responsible for paying the reasonable cost for the program, charter schools are encouraged to work closely with the local district in providing services.

**Q. Can charter schools enter into agreements with local school districts to provide special education services?**

- A. Yes.

**Q. Can charters be granted for pre-school and early childhood education?**

- A. Yes.

**Q. Do all teachers have to be certified?**

- A. Yes. At least 50% of the teachers employed must be certified in Connecticut through the regular route. The remaining 50% may hold a Nonrenewable Charter School Interim Educator Certificate. This nonrenewable certificate must be issued by the State Department of Education Bureau of Certification and Teacher Preparation. Issuance of this certificate is contingent upon meeting entrance requirements for acceptance into the Alternative Route of Certification and completion of required tests.

**Q. Do administrators have to be certified, and, if so, what certification is required?**

- A. Yes. Administrators must be certified as such in accordance with Sections 10-145d-572 et seq. of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies if they serve in a capacity which the regulations describe as administrative.

**Q. Are charter schools required to have administrators?**

- A. No. The public act does not require that charter schools employ administrators. However, there may be some statutorily imposed administrative duties which must be performed by a certified administrator. A charter school could either employ an administrator or arrange to have these duties performed in other ways. For example, a charter school might contract for the services or enter into a cooperative arrangement with another school district.

**Q. Can the requirements of law concerning collective bargaining be waived?**

- A. No. The governing council of the school serves as the school board for collective bargaining purposes. Certified employees of local charter schools are members of the bargaining unit of the school district in which the charter school is located and covered by the same agreement. However, a majority of the governing council and professional employees may modify the collective bargaining agreement. Further, it is possible

that employees of a state charter school may choose not to form a collective bargaining unit and not bargain collectively.

**Q. Can charter schools be ungraded?**

- A. Yes. While, the law provides that charter schools may limit admission to a particular grade, it does not prohibit an ungraded school. Ungraded schools could not be excused from participating in mastery testing, but its students would have to be tested using comparable age to the grade in which they are required to be given.

**Q. If a local charter is approved by a local or regional board of education, is there any basis on which the State Board of Education could disapprove it?**

- A. Yes, if the applications does not meet the requirements imposed by law. If all requirements are met, it is likely that the State Board of Education would grant the application.

**Q. Can a charter school have multiple sites?**

- A. It does not appear that there is anything in the law which would prohibit a multi-site school. However, we would need to be sensitive to the requirements in the law concerning the number of schools permitted and the total student population across schools.

**Q. Are local charter schools responsible to local or regional boards of education or the superintendent of schools of the towns in which they are located?**

- A. No. The law provides that charter schools operate independently of any local or regional board of education in accordance with the terms of its charter and charter school legislation. Charter schools must submit an annual report to the Commissioner of Education concerning the educational progress of the students, the financial condition of the school, accomplishment of the school's mission and the racial and ethnic composition of the student body and efforts taken to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body. In the case of a local charter, this report must also be sent to the board of education of the town in which the school is located.

**Q. Can charter schools charge tuition?**

- A. Charter schools may not charge tuition.

**Q. How will charter schools be evaluated?**

- A. Each charter school must submit an annual report concerning the educational progress of the students who attend the school, its financial condition, the accomplishment of its mission and the racial and ethnic composition of its student body and efforts taken to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body. Each charter school must also submit an annual financial audit on December 31 of each year. This consists of the audit required by the State Department of Education for its End of Year Revenue and Expenditure Report (the ED001C due on September 1 of each year) and the State Single Audit required of all non-profit corporations receiving state funds. In addition, each charter school must comply with the provisions of its charter and applicable laws or face probation or revocation of its charter.

Students attending charter schools must also take the Connecticut mastery tests in grades four, six, eight and ten, the results of which must be included in a school's assessment of its students' performance.

**Q. Does the *Sheff vs. O'Neill* desegregation case have any impact on charter schools?**

- A. Yes. As a result of the *Sheff v. O'Neill* case, the charter school legislation was amended and charter schools are now a vehicle which may be specifically used to increase racial and ethnic diversity in the public schools. The applicant for a charter must now include in its description of its admission criteria, procedures to promote a diverse student body and efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of its staff. The State Board of Education, in making its decision to grant a charter must give preference to schools which will serve students who reside in a priority school district or in a district in which seventy-five per cent or more of the enrolled

students are members of racial or ethnic minorities. It must also consider the effect of a proposed charter school on the reduction of racial, ethnic and economic isolation in the region in which it is to be located.

**Q. Can a charter be revoked?**

- A. Yes. The law provides that the State Board of Education may revoke a charter at any time for the reasons specified in the statute. The Commissioner can place a charter school on probation for the reasons specified in the statute.

**Q. Will charter schools be required to offer courses in all academic subjects as required by Sec. 10-16b?**

- A. Yes. The law requires that all state laws apply to charter schools unless a waiver is obtained. However, it also prohibits the granting of a waiver of the requirements of mastery testing. Therefore, even if the offering of a particular subject is waived, mastery test achievement in that area must be addressed.

**Q. How selective can charter schools be as to admission?**

- A. Charter schools may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual preference, disability, athletic performance or proficiency in the English language, but may limit enrollment to a particular grade level. In addition, charter schools may conceivably limit enrollment to particular towns in accordance with the mission enunciated. If there is not space available for all students seeking enrollment, preference may be given to siblings, but otherwise charter schools must determine enrollment by a lottery.

**Q. What laws apply to discipline in charter schools?**

- A. All laws which apply to local and regional boards of education apply to charter schools unless waived. Therefore, charter schools must adopt policies which provide for the fair and consistent application of disciplinary policies and procedures, afford annual notice of such policies to all students and parents or guardians, comply with due process requirements in imposing discipline and provide an alternative educational opportunity to students who are expelled when required.

**Q. Must charter schools provide transportation for all students attending a charter school?**

- A. The local board of education of the school district in which the charter school is located must provide transportation services for the students of the charter school who reside in such school district, unless the charter school makes other arrangements for such transportation. A local board of education may provide transportation services to a student attending a charter school outside of the district in which the student resides, and if it does so, may be reimbursed for a portion of its reasonable costs by way of its regular transportation grant.

**Q. What assistance will be provided by the State Department of Education to charter school applicants?**

- A. The State Department of Education will provide technical assistance and answer questions concerning matters over which we have jurisdiction. Once schools are approved we will hold workshop sessions and provide written materials concerning a variety of topics. We have identified individuals within the department who will be able to assist applicants with regard to various issues affecting their applications.

**Q. What are the reporting requirements of Charter Schools?**

- A. The governing council of a charter school must annually submit a school profile as described in subsection (c) of C.G.S. §10-220 to the Commissioner of Education. In addition, the governing council of a charter school must annually submit to the Commissioner of Education a report which consists of: (a) the educational progress of students in the school; (b) the financial condition of the school, including a certified audit statement of all revenues and expenditures; (c) accomplishment of the mission and any specialized focus of the charter school; and (d) the racial and ethnic composition of the student body and efforts taken to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body.

**CHARTER SCHOOL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE  
STATE AGENCY CONTACTS**

<i><b>Topic</b></i>	<i><b>Contact Person</b></i>	<i><b>Phone</b></i>
Mastery Tests	Michelle Leon	(860) 713-6856
Collective Bargaining	Karen Flanagan	(860) 713-6520
Establishing a Non-Profit	Office of the Secretary of State	(860) 418-6500
Parent Involvement	Judith Carson	(860) 713-6576
Per Pupil Expenditures	Annette McCall	(860) 713-6470
Professional Development and Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST)	Katie Fisk Natale	(860) 713-6831
Pupil Transportation	Ronald Harris	(860) 713-6520
Public School Law/ Waivers	Karen Flanagan	(860) 713-6520
School Facilities	David Wedge	(860) 713-6467
School Governance and Management	Mark Linabury	(860) 713-6588
Special Education	Nancy Cappello	(860) 713-6918
Student Admissions	Mark Linabury	(860) 713-6588
Student Assessment	Barbara Beaudin	(860) 713-6837
Teacher Certification	Dianne Gray	(860) 713-6969



**CHARTER SCHOOL LEGISLATION**  
**Unofficial**

**Part IVb**  
**Charter Schools**

Sections 10-66aa through 10-66hh of the Connecticut General Statutes as amended by sections 7 and 50 of P.A. 03-76, section 14 of P.A. 03-6 of the June 30 special session, section 50 of P.A. 03-2 of the September 8, 2003 special session and section 8 of P.A. 04-254.

**Sec. 10-66aa. Charter schools: Definitions.** As used in sections 10-66aa to 10- 66ff, inclusive, and section 10-66hh:

(1) "Charter school" means a public, nonsectarian school which is (A) established under a charter granted pursuant to section 10-66bb, (B) organized as a nonprofit entity under state law, (C) a public agency for purposes of the Freedom of Information Act, as defined in section 1-200, and (D) operated independently of any local or regional board of education in accordance with the terms of its charter and the provisions of sections 10-66aa to 10-66ff, inclusive, provided no member or employee of a governing council of a charter school shall have a personal or financial interest in the assets, real or personal, of the school;

(2) "Local charter school" means a public school or part of a public school that is converted into a charter school and is approved by the local or regional board of education of the school district in which it is located and by the State Board of Education pursuant to subsection (e) of section 10-66bb; and

(3) "State charter school" means a new public school approved by the State Board of Education pursuant to subsection (f) of section 10-66bb.

**Sec. 10-66bb** (as amended by section 7 of P.A. 03-76). **Application process and requirements. Charter renewal. Probation. Revocation.** (a) On and after July 1, 1997, the State Board of Education may grant, within available appropriations, charters for local and state charter schools in accordance with this section.

(b) Any person, association, corporation, organization or other entity, public or independent institution of higher education, local or regional board of education or two or more boards of education cooperatively, or regional educational service center may apply to the Commissioner of Education, at such time and in such manner as the commissioner prescribes, to establish a charter school, provided no nonpublic elementary or secondary school may be established as a charter school and no parent or group of parents providing home instruction may establish a charter school for such instruction.

(c) The State Board of Education shall review, annually, all applications and grant charters, provided for the period from July 1, 1997, to June 30, 1999, no more than twenty-four charters for charter schools are granted and, on and after July 1, 1999, no state charter school enrolls (1) (A) more than two hundred fifty students or (B) in the case of a kindergarten to grade eight, inclusive, school, more than three hundred students, or (2) twenty-five per cent of the enrollment of the school district in which the state charter school is to be located, whichever is less. The State Board of Education shall give preference to applicants for charter schools that will serve students who reside in a priority school district pursuant to section 10-266p or in a district in which seventy- five per cent or more of the enrolled students are members of racial or ethnic minorities and to applicants for state charter schools that will be located at a work-site or that are institutions of higher education. In determining whether to grant a charter, the State Board of Education shall consider the effect of the proposed charter school on the reduction of racial, ethnic and economic isolation in the region in which it is to be located, the regional distribution of charter schools in the state

and the potential of over concentration of charter schools within a school district or in contiguous school districts.

(d) Applications pursuant to this section shall include a description of: (1) The mission, purpose and any specialized focus of the proposed charter school; (2) the interest in the community for the establishment of the charter school; (3) the school governance and procedures for the establishment of a governing council that (A) includes teachers and parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school, and (B) is responsible for the oversight of charter school operations, provided no member or employee of the governing council may have a personal or financial interest in the assets, real or personal, of the school; (4) the financial plan for operation of the school, provided no application fees or other fees for attendance, except as provided in section 10-66ee, may be charged; (5) the educational program, instructional methodology and services to be offered to students; (6) the number and qualifications of teachers and administrators to be employed in the school; (7) the organization of the school in terms of the ages or grades to be taught and the total estimated enrollment of the school; (8) the student admission criteria and procedures to (A) ensure effective public information, (B) ensure open access on a space available basis, (C) promote a diverse student body, and (D) ensure that the school complies with the provisions of section 10-15c and that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability, athletic performance or proficiency in the English language, provided the school may limit enrollment to a particular grade level or specialized educational focus and, if there is not space available for all students seeking enrollment, the school may give preference to siblings but shall otherwise determine enrollment by a lottery; (9) a means to assess student performance that includes participation in state- wide mastery examinations pursuant to chapter 163c; (10) procedures for teacher evaluation and professional development for teachers and administrators; (11) the provision of school facilities, pupil transportation and student health and welfare services; (12) procedures to encourage involvement by parents and guardians of enrolled students in student learning, school activities and school decision-making; (13) document efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of staff; and (14) a five-year plan to sustain the maintenance and operation of the school. Subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of section 10-66dd, an application may include, or a charter school may file, requests to waive provisions of the general statutes and regulations not required by sections 10- 66aa to 10-66ff, inclusive, and which are within the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education.

(e) An application for the establishment of a local charter school shall be submitted to the local or regional board of education of the school district in which the local charter school is to be located for approval pursuant to this subsection. The local or regional board of education shall: (1) Review the application; (2) hold a public hearing in the school district on such application; (3) survey teachers and parents in the school district to determine if there is sufficient interest in the establishment and operation of the local charter school; and (4) vote on a complete application not later than sixty days after the date of receipt of such application. Such board of education may approve the application by a majority vote of the members of the board present and voting at a regular or special meeting of the board called for such purpose. If the application is approved, the board shall forward the application to the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall vote on the application not later than seventy-five days after the date of receipt of such application. Subject to the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, the State Board of Education may approve the application and grant the charter for the local charter school or reject such application by a majority vote of the members of the state board present and voting at a regular or special meeting of the state board called for such purpose. The State Board of Education may condition the opening of such school on the school's meeting certain conditions determined by the Commissioner of Education to be necessary and may authorize the commissioner to release the charter when the commissioner determines such conditions are met. The state board may grant the charter for the local charter school for a period of time of up to five years and may allow the applicant to delay its opening for a period of up to one school year in order for the applicant to fully prepare to provide appropriate instructional services.

(f) An application for the establishment of a state charter school shall be (1) submitted to the State Board of Education for approval in accordance with the provisions of this subsection, and (2) filed with the local

or regional board of education in the school district in which the charter school is to be located. The state board shall: (A) Review such application; (B) hold a public hearing on such application in the school district in which such state charter school is to be located; (C) solicit and review comments on the application from the local or regional board of education for the school district in which such charter school is to be located and from the local or regional boards of education for school districts that are contiguous to the district in which such school is to be located; and (D) vote on a complete application not later than seventy-five days after the date of receipt of such application. The State Board of Education may approve an application and grant the charter for the state charter school by a majority vote of the members of the state board present and voting at a regular or special meeting of the state board called for such purpose. The State Board of Education may condition the opening of such school on the school's meeting certain conditions determined by the Commissioner of Education to be necessary and may authorize the commissioner to release the charter when the commissioner determines such conditions are met. Charters shall be granted for a period of time of up to five years and may allow the applicant to delay its opening for a period of up to one school year in order for the applicant to fully prepare to provide appropriate instructional services.

(g) Charters may be renewed, upon application, in accordance with the provisions of this section for the granting of such charters. Upon application for such renewal, the State Board of Education may commission an independent appraisal of the performance of the charter school that includes, but is not limited to, an evaluation of the school's compliance with the provisions of this section. The State Board of Education shall consider the results of any such appraisal in determining whether to renew such charter. The State Board of Education may deny an application for the renewal of a charter if (1) student progress has not been sufficiently demonstrated, as determined by the commissioner, (2) the governing council has not been sufficiently responsible for the operation of the school or has misused or spent public funds in a manner that is detrimental to the educational interests of the students attending the charter school, or (3) the school has not been in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. If the State Board of Education does not renew a charter, it shall notify the governing council of the charter school of the reasons for such nonrenewal.

(h) The Commissioner of Education may at any time place a charter school on probation if (1) the school has failed to (A) adequately demonstrate student progress, as determined by the commissioner, (B) comply with the terms of its charter or with applicable laws and regulations, (C) achieve measurable progress in reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation, or (D) maintain its nonsectarian status, or (2) the governing council has demonstrated an inability to provide effective leadership to oversee the operation of the charter school or has not ensured that public funds are expended prudently or in a manner required by law. If a charter school is placed on probation, the commissioner shall provide written notice to the charter school of the reasons for such placement, not later than five days after the placement, and shall require the charter school to file with the Department of Education a corrective action plan acceptable to the commissioner not later than thirty-five days from the date of such placement. The charter school shall implement a corrective action plan accepted by the commissioner not later than thirty days after the date of such acceptance. The commissioner may impose any additional terms of probation on the school that the commissioner deems necessary to protect the educational or financial interests of the state. The charter school shall comply with any such additional terms not later than thirty days after the date of their imposition. The commissioner shall determine the length of time of the probationary period, which may be up to one year, provided the commissioner may extend such period, for up to one additional year, if the commissioner deems it necessary. In the event that the charter school does not file or implement the corrective action plan within the required time period or does not comply with any additional terms within the required time period, the Commissioner of Education may withhold grant funds from the school until the plan is fully implemented or the school complies with the terms of probation, provided the commissioner may extend the time period for such implementation and compliance for good cause shown. Whenever a charter school is placed on probation, the commissioner shall notify the parents or guardians of students attending the school of the probationary status of the school and the reasons for such status. During the term of probation, the commissioner may require the

school to file interim reports concerning any matter the commissioner deems relevant to the probationary status of the school, including financial reports or statements. No charter school on probation may increase its student enrollment or engage in the recruitment of new students without the consent of the commissioner.

(i) The State Board of Education may revoke a charter if a charter school has failed to: (1) Comply with the terms of probation, including the failure to file or implement a corrective action plan; (2) demonstrate satisfactory student progress, as determined by the commissioner; (3) comply with the terms of its charter or applicable laws and regulations; or (4) manage its public funds in a prudent or legal manner. Unless an emergency exists, prior to revoking a charter, the State Board of Education shall provide the governing council of the charter school with a written notice of the reasons for the revocation, including the identification of specific incidents of noncompliance with the law, regulation or charter or other matters warranting revocation of the charter. It shall also provide the governing council with the opportunity to demonstrate compliance with all requirements for the retention of its charter by providing the State Board of Education or a subcommittee of the board, as determined by the State Board of Education, with a written or oral presentation. Such presentation shall include an opportunity for the governing council to present documentary and testimonial evidence to refute the facts cited by the State Board of Education for the proposed revocation or in justification of its activities. Such opportunity shall not constitute a contested case within the meaning of chapter 54. The State Board of Education shall determine, not later than thirty days after the date of an oral presentation or receipt of a written presentation, whether and when the charter shall be revoked and notify the governing council of the decision and the reasons therefor. A decision to revoke a charter shall not constitute a final decision for purposes of chapter 54. In the event an emergency exists in which the commissioner finds that there is imminent harm to the students attending a charter school, the State Board of Education may immediately revoke the charter of the school, provided the notice concerning the reasons for the revocation is sent to the governing council not later than ten days after the date of revocation and the governing council is provided an opportunity to make a presentation to the board not later than twenty days from the date of such notice.

**Sec. 10-66cc. School profile. Report.** (a) The governing council of a charter school shall submit annually, to the Commissioner of Education, a school profile as described in subsection (c) of section 10-220.

(b) The governing council of each charter school shall submit annually, to the Commissioner of Education, at such time and in such manner as he prescribes, and, in the case of a local charter school, to the local or regional board of education for the school district in which the school is located, a report on the condition of the school, including (1) the educational progress of students in the school, (2) the financial condition of the school, including a certified audit statement of all revenues and expenditures, (3) accomplishment of the mission, purpose and any specialized focus of the charter school, and (4) the racial and ethnic composition of the student body and efforts taken to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body.

**Sec. 10-66dd. School professionals employed in charter schools. Charter schools subject to laws governing public schools; exceptions; waivers.** (a) For purposes of this section, "school professional" means any school teacher, administrator or other personnel certified by the State Board of Education pursuant to section 10-145b.

(b) (1) Subject to the provisions of this subsection and except as may be waived pursuant to subsection (d) of section 10-66bb, charter schools shall be subject to all federal and state laws governing public schools. (2) At least one-half of the persons providing instruction or pupil services in a charter school shall possess the proper certificate other than (A) a certificate issued pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of section 10-145b, or (B) a temporary certificate issued pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-145f on the day the school begins operation and the remaining persons shall possess a

certificate issued pursuant to said subdivision (1) or such temporary certificate on such day.

(3) The commissioner may not waive the provisions of chapters 163c and 169 and sections 10-15c, 10-153a to 10-153g, inclusive, 10-153i, 10-153j, 10-153m and 10-292.

(4) The state charter school governing council shall act as a board of education for purposes of collective bargaining. The school professionals employed by a local charter school shall be members of the appropriate bargaining unit for the local or regional school district in which the local charter school is located and shall be subject to the same collective bargaining agreement as the school professionals employed by said district. A majority of those employed or to be employed in the local charter school and a majority of the members of the governing council of the local charter school may modify, in writing, such collective bargaining agreement, consistent with the terms and conditions of the approved charter, for purposes of employment in the charter school.

(c) School professionals employed by a local or regional board of education shall be entitled to a two-year leave of absence, without compensation, in order to be employed in a charter school provided such leave shall be extended upon request for an additional two years. At any time during or upon the completion of such a leave of absence, a school professional may return to work in the school district in the position in which he was previously employed or a comparable position. Such leave of absence shall not be deemed to be an interruption of service for purposes of seniority and teachers' retirement, except that time may not be accrued for purposes of attaining tenure. A school professional who is not on such a leave of absence and is employed for forty school months of full-time continuous employment by the charter school and is subsequently employed by a local or regional board of education shall attain tenure after the completion of twenty school months of full-time continuous employment by such board of education in accordance with section 10-151.

(d) An otherwise qualified school professional employed in a charter school may participate in the state teacher retirement system under chapter 167a on the same basis as if such professional were employed by a local or regional board of education. The governing council of a charter school shall make the contributions, as defined in subdivision (7) of section 10-183b for such professional.

**Sec. 10-66ee** (as amended by section 14 of P.A. 03-6 of the June 30 special session). **Charter school funding. Special education students. Transportation. Contracts.** (a) For the purposes of education equalization aid under section 10-262h a student enrolled (1) in a local charter school shall be considered a student enrolled in the school district in which such student resides, and (2) in a state charter school shall not be considered a student enrolled in the school district in which such student resides.

(b) The local board of education of the school district in which a student enrolled in a local charter school resides shall pay, annually, in accordance with its charter, to the fiscal authority for the charter school for each such student the amount specified in its charter, including the reasonable special education costs of students requiring special education. The board of education shall be eligible for reimbursement for such special education costs pursuant to section 10-76g.

(c) (1) The state shall, annually, pay in accordance with this subsection, to the fiscal authority for a state charter school, seven thousand two hundred fifty dollars for each student enrolled in such school. Such payments shall be made as follows: Twenty-five per cent of the amount not later than July fifteenth and September fifteenth based on estimated student enrollment on May first, and twenty-five per cent of the amount not later than January fifteenth and the remaining amount not later than April fifteenth, each based on student enrollment on October first. If, for any fiscal year, the total amount appropriated for grants pursuant to this subdivision exceeds seven thousand two hundred fifty dollars per student, the amount of such grants payable per student shall be increased proportionately. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, such increase shall be limited to one hundred ten dollars per student. (2) In the case of a student identified as requiring special education, the school district in which the student resides shall: (A) Hold the planning and placement team meeting for such student and shall invite representatives from the charter school to participate in such meeting; and (B) pay the state charter school, on a quarterly basis, an

amount equal to the difference between the reasonable cost of educating such student and the sum of the amount received by the state charter school for such student pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection and amounts received from other state, federal, local or private sources calculated on a per pupil basis. Such school district shall be eligible for reimbursement pursuant to section 10-76g. The charter school a student requiring special education attends shall be responsible for ensuring that such student receives the services mandated by the student's individualized education program whether such services are provided by the charter school or by the school district in which the student resides.

(d) On or before October fifteenth of the fiscal years beginning July 1, 2001, and July 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Education shall determine if the enrollment in the program for the fiscal year is below the number of students for which funds were appropriated. If the commissioner determines that the enrollment is below such number, the additional funds shall not lapse but shall be used by the commissioner for (1) grants for interdistrict cooperative programs pursuant to section 10-74d, as amended, (2) grants for open choice programs pursuant to section 10-266aa, as amended, or (3) grants for interdistrict magnet schools pursuant to section 10-264l.

(e) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes to the contrary, if at the end of a fiscal year amounts received by a state charter school, pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, are unexpended, the charter school (1) may use, for the expenses of the charter school for the following fiscal year, up to ten per cent of such amounts, and (2) may (A) create a reserve fund to finance a specific capital or equipment purchase or another specified project as may be approved by the commissioner, and (B) deposit into such fund up to five per cent of such amounts.

(f) The local or regional board of education of the school district in which the charter school is located shall provide transportation services for students of the charter school who reside in such school district pursuant to section 10-273a unless the charter school makes other arrangements for such transportation. Any local or regional board of education may provide transportation services to a student attending a charter school outside of the district in which the student resides and, if it elects to provide such transportation, shall be reimbursed pursuant to section 10-266m for the reasonable costs of such transportation. Any local or regional board of education providing transportation services under this subsection may suspend such services in accordance with the provisions of section 10-233c. The parent or guardian of any student denied the transportation services required to be provided pursuant to this subsection may appeal such denial in the manner provided in sections 10-186 and 10-187.

(g) Charter schools shall be eligible to the same extent as boards of education for any grant for special education, competitive state grants and grants pursuant to sections 10-17g and 10-266w.

(h) If the commissioner finds that any charter school uses a grant under this section for a purpose that is inconsistent with the provisions of this part, the commissioner may require repayment of such grant to the state.

(i) Charter schools shall receive, in accordance with federal law and regulations, any federal funds available for the education of any pupils attending public schools.

(j) The governing council of a charter school may (1) contract or enter into other agreements for purposes of administrative or other support services, transportation, plant services or leasing facilities or equipment, and (2) receive and expend private funds or public funds, including funds from local or regional boards of education and funds received by local charter schools for out-of-district students, for school purposes.

**Sec. 10-66ff. Powers. Liability limited. Participation in Short-Term Investment Fund.** (a) Each charter school may (1) sue and be sued, (2) purchase, receive, hold and convey real and personal property for school purposes, and (3) borrow money for such purposes.

(b) The state, a local or regional board of education or the applicant for a charter school shall have no liability for the acts, omissions, debts or other obligations of such charter school, except as may be provided in an agreement or contract with such charter school.

(c) Charter schools established pursuant to sections 10-66aa to 10-66gg, inclusive, shall be eligible to invest in participation certificates of the Short-Term Investment Fund administered by the State Treasurer pursuant to sections 3-27a to 3-27f, inclusive.

**Sec. 10-66gg. Report to General Assembly.** Within available appropriations, the Commissioner of Education shall annually, review and report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, on the operation of such charter schools as may be established pursuant to sections 10-66aa to 10-66ff, inclusive, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education. Such report shall include: (1) Recommendations for any statutory changes that would facilitate expansion in the number of charter schools; (2) a compilation of school profiles pursuant to section 10-66cc; (3) an assessment of the adequacy of funding pursuant to section 10-66ee, and (4) the adequacy and availability of suitable facilities for such schools.

**Sec. 10-66hh. Program to assist charter schools with capital expenses.** For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2002, and June 30, 2003, and June 30, 2004, the Commissioner of Education shall establish, within available appropriations and bond authorizations, a grant program to assist state charter schools in financing (1) school building projects, as defined in section 10-282 of the general statutes, (2) general improvements to school buildings, as defined in subsection (2) of section 10-265(h) of the general statutes, and (3) repayment of debt incurred for prior school building projects. Eligibility for such grants shall be limited to state charter schools whose charters were renewed in the fiscal years ending June 30, 2001, June 30, 2002, and June 30, 2003, pursuant to subsection (g) of section 10-66bb of the general statutes. The governing authorities of such state charter school may apply for such grants to the Department of Education at such time and in such manner as the commissioner prescribes. Each state charter school may receive no more than one grant under this section and no grant under this section shall exceed five hundred thousand dollars.

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## CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES WHICH HAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE OPERATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

**Note:** Provisions which represent new requirements appear in italics.

Section **10-220(a)**, as amended by section 1 of P.A. 03-220, describes the **duties of boards of education**. It provides as follows:

Each local or regional board of education shall maintain good public elementary and secondary schools, **implement the educational interests of the state** as defined in section 10-4a and provide such other educational activities as in its judgment will best serve the interests of the school district; provided any board of education may secure such opportunities in another school district in accordance with provisions of the general statutes and shall **give all the children of the school district as nearly equal advantages as may be practicable**; shall provide an appropriate learning environment for its students which includes (1) adequate instructional books, supplies, materials, equipment, staffing, facilities and technology, (2) equitable allocation of resources among its schools, (3) proper maintenance of facilities, and (4) a safe school setting; shall have charge of the schools of its respective school district; shall make a **continuing study of the need for school facilities** and of a **long-term school building program** and from time to time make recommendations based on such study to the town; shall adopt and implement an **indoor air quality program** that provides for ongoing maintenance and facility reviews necessary for the **maintenance and improvement of the indoor air quality** of its facilities; shall report annually to the Commissioner of Education on the condition of its facilities and the action taken to implement its long-term school building program and indoor air quality program, which report the Commissioner of Education shall use to prepare an annual report that said commissioner shall submit in accordance with section 11-4a to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education; shall advise the Commissioner of Education of the relationship between any individual school building project pursuant to chapter 173 and such long-term school building program; shall have the **care, maintenance and operation of buildings, lands, apparatus and other property** used for school purposes and at all times shall **insure all such buildings and all capital equipment** contained therein against loss in an amount not less than eighty per cent of replacement cost; shall determine the number, age and **qualifications of the pupils to be admitted** into each school; shall develop and implement a **written plan for minority staff recruitment** for purposes of subdivision (3) of section 10-4a; shall **employ and dismiss the teachers** of the schools of such district subject to the provisions of sections 10-151 and 10-158a; shall **designate the schools which shall be attended** by the various children within the school district; shall make provisions as will enable each child of school age, residing in the district to attend some public day school for the period required by law and **provide for the transportation** of children wherever transportation is reasonable and desirable, and for such purpose **may make contracts** covering periods of not more than five years; may place in an alternative school program or other suitable educational program a pupil enrolling in school who is nineteen years of age or older and cannot acquire a sufficient number of credits for graduation by age twenty-one; may arrange

with the board of education of an adjacent town for the instruction therein of such children as can attend school in such adjacent town more conveniently; shall cause each child five years of age and over and under eighteen years of age who is not a high school graduate and is living in the school district to attend school in accordance with the provisions of section 10-184, and shall perform all acts required of it by the town or necessary to carry into effect the powers and duties imposed by law. **(Please note that pursuant to Section 10-184, a parent or person having control of a child five or six years of age has the option of not sending the child to school until age seven by personally appearing at the school district office and signing an option form. The school district must provide information about the educational opportunities available in the school system. Effective July 1, 2001, students must stay in school until age 18 unless a parent or other person having control over them consents to their leaving school at 16 or 17.)**

Each school district must prescribe **rules for the management, studies, classification and discipline of the public schools**, including the selection and use of nondiscriminatory texts, supplementary books, library books, supplies, materials and equipment as it deems necessary to meet the needs of instruction in its schools; adopt and **implement policies and procedures** concerning (1) homework, attendance, promotion and retention, (2) drug and alcohol use, sale and possession on school property, (3) youth suicide prevention and attempts, (4) truancy, (5) the encouragement parent-teacher communication, and (6) weighted grading for honors and advanced placement courses, (7) the existence of bullying in its schools, and (8) ensuring that time is available each school day for the recitation of the pledge of allegiance. **Promotion and graduation policies** must be revised to ensure that such policies foster student achievement and reduce the incidence of social promotion and local boards must specify the **basic skills necessary for graduation** for classes graduating in 2006 and thereafter. Each local and regional board of education is responsible for providing and displaying **flags** in each classroom. (Sections **10-18a, 10-198a, 10-221, 10-222d, 10-228, 10-230 and 10-223a**)

Sections **10-16b, 10-18, 10-19, 10-220(b) and 10-221a** obligate school districts to (1) offer **prescribed courses of study** in accordance with duly adopted educational goals and student objectives **as part of a planned, ongoing and systematic program of instruction**, and (2) **require minimum credit requirements for high school graduation**. Section 10-221h requires boards to develop and implement a three-year **plan to improve the reading skills** of students in grades kindergarten through three. **Prescribed courses of study** pursuant to Sec. 10-16b **include** the arts; career education; consumer education; health and safety, including, but not limited to, human growth and development, nutrition, first aid, disease prevention, community and consumer health, physical, mental and emotional health, including youth suicide prevention, substance abuse prevention, safety, which may include the dangers of gang membership, and accident prevention; language arts, including reading, writing, grammar, speaking and spelling; mathematics; physical education; science; social studies, including, but not limited to, citizenship, economics, geography, government and history; and in addition, on at least the secondary level, one or more foreign languages and vocational education. Instruction must also be given in United States history, government and citizenship (Sec. 10-18); in the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to understand and avoid the effects of alcohol, of nicotine or tobacco, and drugs (Sec. 10-19); and on acquired immune deficiency syndrome (Sec. 10-19). The minimum high school graduation requirement is twenty credits, not fewer than four of which must be in English, not fewer than three in mathematics, not fewer than

three in social studies, not fewer than two in science, not fewer than one in the arts or vocational education and not fewer than one in physical education. Beginning with high school classes graduating in 2004, students must have at least a one-half credit course in civics and American History, which is to be part of the credits required in social studies.

Section 10-14n requires students in fourth, sixth, eighth and tenth grades to take a statewide mastery test. P.A. 03-168 has amended this section to conform to the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and beginning in the 2005-2006 school year, statewide mastery tests must be given annually, in April, to all students enrolled in grades three to eight, inclusive and in grade ten to measure skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Beginning in the 2007-2008, the statewide mastery test must include science. No student in grades seven through twelve shall be administered such test earlier than 9:00 am. (Please see the various circular letters and other information which has been sent to you concerning the No Child Left Behind Act, including requirements concerning adequate yearly progress and consequences for failure to meet this goal; highly qualified teaching staff; persistently dangerous schools and other provisions of this federal law.)

Pursuant to Sections 10-145 to 10-145b, inclusive, 10-151 to 10-151c, inclusive, 10-153 to 10-153g, inclusive, 10-155f, 10-156 to 10-157a, inclusive, 10-220a, 10-221d, 10-235, 10-236a and 10-76dd, districts must employ, evaluate and indemnify appropriately certified and qualified personnel; develop and implement teacher evaluation and professional development programs ; provide in-service training on (1) the nature and relationship of drugs and alcohol to personality development and procedures to discourage their abuse, (2) health and mental health risk education, (3) the growth and development of exceptional children, and (4) school violence prevention and conflict resolution, (5) cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other emergency life saving procedures, (6) computer and other information technology as applied to student learning and classroom instruction, communications and data management, (7) the teaching of the language arts, reading and reading readiness for teachers in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, and (8) second language acquisition in districts required to provide a program of bilingual education; and file a signed copy of its teacher and administrator collective bargaining agreements with the Commissioner of Education. Athletic coaches must be evaluated annually and be provided with certain rights if terminated. (P.A. 04-243) No board member shall be employed by the board of education of which he or she is a member under Section 10-232.

Sections 10-221 and 10-233a through 10-233g, inclusive, require school districts to (1) adopt policies governing student conduct which provide for the fair and consistent application of disciplinary policies and procedures, (2) afford annual notice of such policies to all pupils and their parents and guardians, and (3) comply with due process requirements in imposing discipline.

Section 10-4a defines the educational interests of the state which shall include, but not be limited to the concern of the state that

- (1) each child shall have for the period prescribed in the general statutes equal opportunity to receive a suitable program of educational experiences;
- (2) each school district shall finance at a reasonable level at least equal to the minimum expenditure requirement pursuant to the provisions of section 10-262j an educational program designed to achieve this end;
- (3) in order to reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation, each school district shall provide educational opportunities for its students to interact with students and teachers from other racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds and may provide such opportunities with students from other communities; and
- (4) the mandates in the general statutes pertaining to education within the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education be implemented.

Section 10-226h requires school districts to report, by July 1, 2000 and biennially thereafter, on the programs and activities undertaken to reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation, including information on the programs undertaken and evidence over time of progress made . Section 10-220 requires each local and regional board of education to develop and implement a written plan for minority staff recruitment.

School districts are required to provide at least one hundred and eighty days of actual school work for grades kindergarten to twelve and no less than nine hundred hours of actual school work for full day kindergarten and grades one to twelve and four hundred and fifty hours of actual school work for half-day kindergarten pursuant to Sections 10-15 and 10-16.

Sections 10-15c, 10-186 and 10-253 require school districts to provide full and free access, by transportation or otherwise, to its programs to all eligible students without discrimination on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation, including to those residing with relatives and non-relatives and to those residing in temporary shelters. Children are eligible to attend school if they attain the age of five on or before January 1 of a school year until they attain the age of twenty-one or graduate.

Section 10-220d requires local and regional boards of education to provide full access to regional vocational-technical schools, regional vocational agriculture centers, interdistrict magnet schools, charter schools and interdistrict student attendance programs for the recruitment, other than for the purpose of interscholastic athletic competition, of students attending the schools under the board's jurisdiction.

School districts must provide special education and related services to all eligible children requiring special education pursuant to Sections 10-76a through 10-76q. School districts have certain responsibilities for resident students requiring special education and related services who attend charter and magnet schools pursuant to Section 10-66ee and Section 10-264l(h).

Sections 10-17, 10-17a and 10-17d through 10-17g require school districts to assess the needs of students who are speakers of languages other than English and to provide bilingual

education, English as a second language and other support services where required and when requested by parents.

Adult education services must be provided for adult residents by a local or regional board of education or through cooperative arrangements or at a cooperating eligible entity or at a regional educational service center as required by Sections 10-67 through 10-73c.

School districts must furnish transportation to eligible public and private school students, including students attending charter schools and magnet schools, and develop and implement a policy for reporting of all complaints relative to school transportation safety pursuant to Sections 10-66ee, 10-97, 10-186, 10-220, 10-221c, 10-264l, 10-277, 10-280a and 10-281.

When a student enrolls in a new school district, the district must notify the student's former district, which must transfer the student's records no later than ten days after such notification. (Section 10-220h)

Section 10-16a requires each local and regional board of education to provide an opportunity for silent meditation for teachers and students at the start of each school day.

Sections 10-15b and 46b-56 require school districts to allow parents (custodial and non-custodial) access to the records of their minor children except for records containing information that is considered confidential under Section 10-154a and certain health information which is confidential pursuant to other provisions of the General Statutes. Under Section 10-221b, districts must establish a written, uniform policy concerning on-campus recruiting and access to directory information for all recruiters, including commercial, military and non-military and those representing institutions of higher education.

School districts must operate school health programs to ensure the well-being of their students in accordance with Sections 10-203 through 10-204a, 10-205 through 10-210, 10-212, 10-212a, and 10-214 through 10-215 and allow students to be exempted from family life education programs under Section 10-16e. A copy of the record of each pesticide application at a school must be maintained at the school for five years. Pesticides may not be applied during regular school hours or planned activities, and, at the beginning of each school year, boards must notify parents about pesticide

application policies and pesticide applications the previous year. Boards must also establish a registry of those who want prior notice of pesticide application and provide such notice. (Sections 10-231b through 10-231d) P.A. 03-220 requires each board of education to adopt and implement an indoor air quality program which provides for ongoing maintenance and facility review. Prior to January 1, 2008, and every five years thereafter, boards must provide for a

uniform inspection and evaluation of the indoor air quality of every school building constructed, extended, renovated or replaced on or after January 1, 2003.

Each local and regional board shall require each school to (1) offer full day students a daily lunch period of not less than twenty minutes and (2) include in the regular school day for each student enrolled in grades kindergarten to five, inclusive, a period of physical exercise. Each local and regional board shall make available for purchase by students enrolled in their schools nutritious, low-fat drinks when drink is available for purchase and low-fat dairy products and fresh or dried fruit at times when food is available for purchase. (P.A. 04-224) Section 10-266w obligates school districts to provide breakfast programs when required.

School districts must maintain sanitary and safe schools in accordance with all applicable fire, safety and health codes, ordinances, regulations and laws so that no serious threat of danger exists to any lawful occupant. Smoking in school buildings is prohibited while school is in session or student activities are being conducted. (Sections 10-203, 10-220, 10-221, 10-231 and 19a-342)

Section 10-221g requires each local and regional board of education to conduct an instructional time and facility usage assessment in order to maximize student learning and community use of facilities. Section 10-220 requires each board to report annually to the Commissioner on the condition of its facilities and action taken to implement its long term school building program.

Teachers, principals, guidance counselors, paraprofessionals and coaches of intramural and interscholastic athletics must report suspected or known abuse, or danger of abuse, of children to the Commissioner of Children and Families or his representative or law enforcement officials as soon as practical but not less than twelve hours of forming a reasonable belief of abuse, neglect or imminent risk of serious harm. Boards must report suspected or known abuse by a school employee to the Commissioner of Education and adopt a written policy regarding the reporting by school employees of suspected child abuse. (Sections 17a-101 through 17a-101i and 17a-103)

Section 10-217a requires school districts to provide health services to students in eligible private schools when designated this responsibility by the town or city.

School districts must properly plan for and maintain all funds and accounts within their jurisdiction pursuant to Sections 10-222 and 10-237 and make returns of receipts, expenditures and statistics as prescribed by the Commissioner under Section 10-237. Section 10-220(c) requires local and regional boards of education to submit strategic school profile reports by November 1 of each year

Boards of Education must elect officers and hold meetings pursuant to Section 10-218, and hold public hearings on citizen petition under Section 10-238.

Sections 10-249 and 10-250 require boards of education to determine by age the number of children of compulsory school age residing in the district and report this information to the Commissioner.

Special note re Priority School Districts – Priority school districts receive special grants for such programs as extra school hours, preschool, library book purchase, infrastructure repair, early reading success and summer school. These districts may have to comply with additional requirements due to their status or as conditions for receipt of specific grants available to them.

PLEASE NOTE: THERE ARE MANY OTHER STATUTES WHICH IMPOSE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS; HOWEVER, THIS LIST CONTAINS THOSE MOST VITAL TO THE ORDERLY OPERATION OF OUR SCHOOLS

## 2004 CONNECTICUT CHARTER SCHOOLS

<i>Charter School</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>2004 -05 Student Enrollment</i>	<i>2004 -05 Grade Levels</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>Founding Coalition</i>
<b>Amistad Academy</b>	New Haven	276	5-8	Dacia Toll, Executive Director Amistad Academy 407 James Street New Haven, CT 06513 Tel: (203) 773-0390 Fax: (203) 773-0364 Email: daciattoll@amistadacademy.org	Teachers Parents Community Activists Civic & Business Leaders Attorneys Scholars Students
State Charter School Opened Fall 1999					

The mission of Amistad Academy is two-fold: to challenge our students with a rigorous academic program and to teach them to act as effective public citizens. Our high-expectations educational model includes a challenging core curriculum, ongoing use of diagnostic assessments, an extended school day and year, a performance-based system for promotion, individualized learning plans, parent contracts, and a high-standards, professional environment for teachers. Students are citizens and leaders of their own micro-society, complete with a student-run General Assembly, bank, micro-businesses, courts, and newspaper. The Academy is a strong, values-driven school community where every member is respected and expected to contribute to the community and to their city.

<b>Bridge Academy</b>	Bridgeport	175	9-12	Timothy Dutton, Director Bridge Academy P.O. Box 2267 Bridgeport, CT 06608 Tel: (203) 336-9999 Fax: (203) 336-9852 Email: bridgeacademy@yahoo.com	Teachers
State Charter School Opened in Fall 1997					

The Bridge Academy provides a college preparatory curriculum designed to overcome the problems found in the inner city. The goals are met through parental involvement, a mentor program with professionals from the Bridgeport business community, an introduction to the world outside of Bridgeport that includes the arts, and small enrollment that fosters a sense of community and self-respect.

<b>Common Ground High School</b>	New Haven	135	9-12	Oliver Barton, Executive Director Common Ground High School 358 Springside Avenue New Haven, CT 06515 Tel: (203) 389-4333 Fax: (203) 389-7458 Email: obarton@nhcp.com	Teachers Community Organizations Higher Ed Institutions Others
State Charter School Opened in Fall 1997					

Common Ground High School is shaped by an ecological framework derived from the basic premise of ecology: *All living things and non-living things are connected and interdependent.* This framework guides the interdisciplinary curriculum. The school uses a farm and forest site in the city as the ideal context for studying connections in the community, traditional academic disciplines, and the natural environment that sustains them. Common Ground emphasizes team-taught, interdisciplinary courses promoting active, performance-based learning. Students are expected to strive for ecological literacy, academic excellence, strong character, and commitment to community. An after-school program and opportunities for involvement by and with the wider community are also made available.

<i>Charter School</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>2004 -05 Student Enrollment</i>	<i>2004 -05 Grade Levels</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>Founding Coalition</i>
<b>Elm City College Preparatory School</b>	New Haven	150	K-1 and 5	Marc Michaelson, Middle School Director Dale Chu, Elementary School Director Elm City College Preparatory School 240 Green Street New Haven, CT 06511 Tel: (203) 498-0702 Fax: (203) 498-0712	Teachers Business Leaders Community Activist Higher Ed Institutions
State Charter School Opened in Fall 2004					

Elm City College Preparatory School will strengthen the academic and character skills needed for all students to excel in the top tier of high schools and colleges, to achieve success in a competitive world, and to serve as the next generation of leaders in their communities. Students will become critical thinkers and creative problem-solvers. They will learn to work effectively in teams and develop a sense of social responsibility.

<b>Explorations</b>	Winsted	77	10-12	Gail Srebnik, Executive Director Explorations 71 Spencer Street Winsted, CT 06098 Tel: (860) 738-9070 Fax: (860) 738-9092 Email: explorations.02@snet.net	Teachers
State Charter School Opened in Fall 1997					

The mission of the Explorations charter school is to cultivate a positive attitude towards life-long learning in an experiential, non-traditional educational setting. Students participate in experiential educational activities such as career exploration and adventure education, in addition to their individual course work. Supportive experiential activities are emphasized; tutoring and counseling are provided regularly; and students are encouraged to participate in a partnership to earn tuition-free community college credit while attending high school. Students must be present 90 percent of the time and pass 80 percent of their course work to participate. Explorations adheres to its strict attendance, admissions and academic contracts.

<b>Highville Mustard Seed Charter School</b>	Hamden/ New Haven	300	PreK-8	Lyndon Pitter, Executive Director Highville Mustard Seed Charter School 130 Leederhill Drive Hamden, CT 06517 Tel: (203) 287-0528 Fax: (203) 287-0693 Email: highville@aol.com	Parents Business Community Community Organizations Higher Ed Institutions Others
State Charter School Opened in Fall 1998					

The Highville Mustard Seed Charter School provides the Newhallville (New Haven) and the Highwood (Hamden) communities with a Pre K-8 school with a global studies curriculum. The school incorporates the arts and foreign language as a means to teach the basic skills as well as the Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). The Highville School is developed in partnership with three area colleges and seeks to serve as a Professional Development Model School. The school serves as a center for cultural, health, athletic and educational programs and workshops for the community.

<i>Charter School</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>2004 -05 Student Enrollment</i>	<i>2004 -05 Grade Levels</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>Founding Coalition</i>
<b>Integrated Day Charter School</b>	Norwich	300	PK-8	Joan Heffernan, Director Integrated Day Charter School 68 Thermos Avenue Norwich, CT 06360 Tel: (860) 892-1900 Fax: (860) 892-1902 Email: <a href="mailto:joanh@idcs.org">joanh@idcs.org</a>	Parents Teachers Higher Ed Institutions
State Charter School Opened in Fall 1997					

The Integrated Day program is an alternative program which adheres to a developmental approach. The teaching methods used differ dramatically from those used in the conventional classroom. The underlying philosophy of the program recognizes that to be actively involved and truly engaged, a learner must have input into both the content of the learning and the process by which the knowledge is acquired. Specific areas of concentration include individual research, parental involvement, social curriculum, multi-age grouping, personal goal setting and assessment, sense of community and an extended schedule.

<b>Interdistrict School for Arts and Communications</b>	New London	165	6-8	Michele Femc-Bagwell, Director Interdistrict School for Arts and Communications, Inc. (ISAAC) 3 Garvin Street New London, CT 06320 Tel: (860) 447-1003 Fax: (860) 447-0470 Email: <a href="mailto:Isaac@snet.net">Isaac@snet.net</a>	Parents Educators
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The Interdistrict School for the Arts and Communications (ISAAC) is a regional center for interdisciplinary learning, ISAAC's holistic approach to education features an academically rigorous curriculum whose various disciplines are integrated through the arts and modern communication skills. The curriculum supports a learning community that is both multicultural and multilingual, based on a framework of knowledge, skills and awareness. With its small and diverse student body, it strives to be a model for reduction of racial isolation.

<b>Jumoke Academy</b>	Hartford	294	K-6	Michael Sharpe, Director Jumoke Academy 250 Blue Hills Ave. Hartford, CT 06112 Tel: (860) 527-0575 Fax: (860) 525-7758 Email: <a href="mailto:jumokeacademy@aol.com">jumokeacademy@aol.com</a>	Parents Teachers Higher Ed Institutions Others
State Charter School Opened in Fall 1997					

Jumoke Academy's basic goal is to prepare children to compete in the global marketplace through sound basic education founded on early intervention, parental involvement and neighborhood and cultural identity. It integrates the community, families and university settings. Among the school's objectives are teaching all children a foreign language, encouraging strong parental involvement, and helping students to achieve mastery of basic skills, technology and arts literacy.

<i>Charter School</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>2004 -05 Student Enrollment</i>	<i>2004 -05 Grade Levels</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>Founding Coalition</i>
<b>New Beginnings Family Academy</b>	Bridgeport	225	K-5	Tania Kelley, Director New Beginnings Family Academy 510 Barnum Avenue, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Bridgeport, CT 06608 Tel: (203) 384-2897 Fax: (203) 384-2898 Email: tkelley@nbfacademy.org	Teachers
State Charter School Opened in Fall 2002					

New Beginnings Family Academy (NBFA) provides a challenging academic experience in a disciplined yet loving, safe and nurturing environment. The school's holistic approach to education encompasses the child, the family and the surrounding community. Hands-on science and math are taught with innovation and practical application. The core curriculum emphasizes early literacy with fluency and comprehension. Character education, cultural programming and recreational activities balance the rigor of the academic schedule. NBFA offers an extended day and an extended year program benefiting both student and parent/guardian. A talented and committed teaching staff is trained in Family Academy curriculum — a curriculum that has documented success in teaching to an urban student population. A full-time Family Services Worker is an integral part of the school team, acting as child advocate and family/community resource. Future plans include a Health and Family Services Center that will provide information and services to the entire family. State funding is combined with private financial contributions to establish a stimulating educational environment with services and materials usually found only in tuition-driven schools.

<b>Odyssey Community School</b>	Manchester	140	5-8	Elaine Stancliffe, Executive Director Odyssey Community School 579 Middle Turnpike, West Manchester, CT 06040 Tel: (860) 645-1234 Fax: (860) 533-0324 Email: estancliffe@odyssey school.org	Teachers Community Organizations Higher Education Parents
State Charter School Opened in Fall 1997					

Odyssey Community School provides an exemplary education in a community that nurtures the unique mind and heart of each child. Students are taught to think clearly, learn independently, consume information wisely, communicate effectively in a variety of media, and understand the power of technology in society. Holding students accountable to high standards of behavior, families and teachers work together to help them become responsible citizens of strong, compassionate character who know themselves well. Graduates will be eager to continue learning and committed to improving the communities in which they live.

<b>Side by Side Community School</b>	Norwalk/ Regional	235	PreK-8	Bruce Ravage, Director Side by Side Community School 10 Chestnut Street South Norwalk, CT 06854 Tel: (203) 857-0306 Fax: (203) 838-2666 Email: <a href="mailto:b.ravage@sidebysideschool.org">b.ravage@sidebysideschool.org</a>	Teachers Higher Education
State Charter School Opened in Fall 1997					

The mission of the Side by Side Community School is to create a multiracial learning environment for urban and suburban children and their families that ensure every child succeeds and every voice is heard. The school addresses all factors that affect achievement. It houses a Family Center using the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School model developed by Edward Ziegler at Yale University. As a Professional Development school, Side by Side is committed to perfecting the art and craft of teaching. Its philosophy of social justice drives its interdisciplinary curriculum. As a training site for interns, it serves as a model for the practice of child-centered, interactive instruction in a diverse setting.

<i>Charter School</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>2004 -05 Student</i>	<i>2004 -05 Grade</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>Founding Coalition</i>
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		<i>Enrollment</i>	<i>Levels</i>		
<b>Stamford Academy</b>	Stamford	100	9-12	Michael Duggan, Executive Director Michael McGuire, Director Stamford Academy 229 North Street Stamford, CT 06092 Tel: (203) 324-6300 Fax: (203) 324-6310 Email: <a href="mailto:mgd4271213@aol.com">mgd4271213@aol.com</a>	Parents Teachers Business Leaders Community Activists Higher Ed Institutions
State Charter School Opened in Fall 2004					

The mission of Stamford Academy is to provide a positive, challenging and responsive learning environment for high school students who have not succeeded in a traditional setting in order to assure that no child shall be denied hope, love or a fair chance in life.

<b>Trailblazers Academy</b>	Stamford	121	6-8	Michael Duggan, Exe. Director Craig Baker, Director Trailblazers Academy P.O. Box 15588 Park Square Station Stamford, CT 06901-0360 Tel: (203) 977-5690 Fax: (203) 977-5688 Email: <a href="mailto:mgd4271213@aol.com">mgd4271213@aol.com</a>	Community Agency Local School District Local Government
State Charter School Opened in Fall 1999					

The mission of Trailblazers Academy is to create a safe, supportive, structured school community which enables students to identify and develop their abilities and interests as they meet high academic standards. A collaborative effort involving the City of Stamford, the Stamford public schools and the Domus Foundation, Trailblazers Academy asks each member of the school community, from parents to students to staff, to bring their gifts and talents to the learning table.

